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THE NORSE IN ISLAY

A Settlement Historical Case-Study
for Medieval Scandinavian Activity
in Western Maritime Scotland

Alan Macniven

PhD

The University of Edinburgh

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

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ABBREVIATIONS

acc.	accusative
adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
approx.	approximately
c.	*circa*, 'around'
cf.	compare
dat.	dative
ed./eds.	editor(s)
eg.	*exempli gratia*, 'for example'
E	English
etc.	*et cetera*, 'and others'
f	feminine
Fa	Faroese
G	Gaelic
gen.	genitive
Ir	Irish
ibid.	*ibidem*, 'in the same place'
Ic	Icelandic
ie.	*id est*, 'that is'
loc. cit.	*loco citato*, 'in the place cited'
m	masculine
n	neuter
nom	nominative
Mod	modern
OD	*ordnance datum*: height above sea-level
OIr	Old Irish
ON	Old Norse
op. cit.	*opera citato*, 'in the work cited'
pers. Comm.	personal communication
pl.	plural
sg.	singular
S	Scots (English)
trans.	translator(s)
Wc	Welsh
*	reconstructed form
<	developed from
>	developed to
/ /	slashes enclosing orthographic symbol(s)
[ ]	1. Letters within brackets have been supplied, for whatever reason, when absent from the original text 2. Square brackets are also used to enclose phonetic symbols and phonetic renderings of place-name material
[...]	text omitted from citation due to irrelevance

ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to examine the assumption that Norse settlement in western maritime Scotland was substantially less extensive and influential than in more northerly parts of the maritime zone. This assumption is based on comparison of the apparent ratios of Norse to Gaelic farm-names in these areas; and the observation that the inhabitants of the former were Gaelic-speaking in both the Early Historic and Later Medieval periods. In view of the virtual hiatus in the documentary record between *c.* AD 750 and *c.* AD 1150 and the unqualified nature of the place-name ratios, it is suggested that such evidence is misleading. The investigation which follows comprises a detailed case-study of the island of Islay. Although use is made of environmental, archaeological, historical and fiscal data, the main focus is on place-names. Emphasis is placed throughout on the processes by which names become implanted in the landscape and the factors which affect their survival afterwards.

There are three sections. Background material for the study of Norse settlement is presented in the first. This includes: a detailed examination of the physical environment, an ethno-linguistic profile for the pre-Norse community and a review of the evidence for Norse activity in Islay specifically within the context of western maritime Scotland generally. Aspects of Dalriadan and Norse society are highlighted which prompt critical re-appraisal of theories on Norse settlement. It is suggested that this process was not without friction. It may have involved a certain amount of violent depopulation and almost certainly led to social dichotomisation between the Norse incomers and remaining natives.

Section two comprises a theoretical and methodological introduction to place-name studies. Following an overview of basic theory, Islay sources and previous approaches to Norse settlement, a model is presented for the study of Islay's Norse place-names. While use is made of both habitative and nature names, the framework selected as most appropriate is Stephen MacDougall's map of 1749-51. As this provides typologically uniform coverage of all of the island's farm-districts from a period preceding the agrarian reforms and settlement re-organisation of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, it is more likely to reflect the settlement patterns and nomenclature of the Middle Ages than later yet more detailed sources.

The third section, which constitutes the bulk of the thesis, concentrates on analysis of the place-name data presented in Appendices I and II. There are two main parts to this section. The linguistic back-ground, economic potential and spatial characteristics of individual farm-districts are examined in the first. Contrary to previous assumptions, it is noted that farm-districts with Norse names are spread fairly evenly across all land-types on the island. They are not primarily coastal, restricted to enclaves or less likely to include Iron Age fortifications than those with Gaelic names. Analysis of the distribution and linguistic categorisation of the nomenclature in view of post-Norse historical developments suggests that many of the island's Gaelic settlement names are the result of prestige immigration in the 12th century or later. This hypothesis is supported by linguistic investigation of the more common habitative generics shown on MacDougall's map. Magnus Olsen's User-group theory is then applied to the typology and distribution of ON nature-name material. It is argued that this too supports the idea of widespread Norse language use being replaced by a reintroduction of Gaelic and Gaelic naming practices.

The second part of this section comprises an examination of land and territorial divisions. The fiscal 'extents' of later medieval and early modern Islay have long been considered anomalous in a Hebridean context. Examination of the historical and fiscal sources in conjunction with a geometric analysis of the farm-districts on MacDougall's map, suggests that Islay may once have been divided into the 'ounceland' units more familiar from surrounding areas. These findings are then developed in the context of ecclesiastic organisation. While certain aspects of Islay's later medieval parish system appear to reflect the military districts of the *Senchus fer nAlban*, it is argued that these survived through the intermediary of an Orcadian style *leiðangr* system of naval defence. It is concluded that while the Norse impact on Islay was less long-lived than in more northerly parts of maritime Scotland, it was not necessarily any less intense or destructive with regards to the pre-existing ethno-linguistic identity.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Basic thesis

The study of Norse settlement in Scotland has long been dominated by the 'War or Peace?' debate.[1] That arguments for both the violent displacement and peaceful assimilation of native populations by Norse incomers have drawn most heavily on data from the Northern Isles is a simple reflection on the availability of evidence.[2] One less fortunate reflex of this situation, however, has been the conceptual marginalisation of Norse settlement in the western parts of maritime Scotland – namely, the Inner Hebrides.

There is little direct evidence for the social, political or linguistic identities of the Inner Hebrides between *c.* AD 750 and *c.* 1150 – the likely period of Norse settlement. Given the lower ratio of Norse to Gaelic farm-names in Islay compared to Lewis (Thomas 1876, 1881-2; Oftedal 1954), it is nevertheless assumed by exponents of the War and Peace schools alike that the scale and impact of Norse land-taking in this area was considerably less significant than in more northerly parts of the maritime zone. In fact, as the Inner Hebrides are known to have been Gaelic-speaking in both the preceding and following periods, it is routinely assumed that there must have been substantial continuity in population and language in between (Andersen 1991).

In the 120 years since Thomas published his place-name ratios, however, there has been little debate on the context of Norse settlement in this area – of how the implantation of Norse names and their survival *in situ* was possible in a landscape that was already fully occupied by speakers of Gaelic. While the ratio of Norse to Gaelic farm-names might be relatively small in Islay compared to Lewis, the number of palpably Norse place-names on the current Ordnance Survey maps of the Inner Hebrides can still be counted in their hundreds. For so many names of this type to have survived into modern times points more clearly to disjuncture than continuity, certainly in language and probably also in population (*cf.* Kruse 2004).

Perhaps even more surprising, given the retrospective nature of this kind of analysis, has been the lack of attention paid to post-Norse socio-economic and political developments and their effect on the local nomenclature. Considering the important changes in language, population, settlement distribution and consequently naming traditions which are known to have taken place here since the height of the Viking Age, it must be wondered whether the surviving Norse place-names should not be seen as the tip of the onomastic iceberg. Indeed, if this this line of questioning was taken to its logical conclusion, we would have to ask whether the Norse impact on the Inner Hebrides, relatively short-lived as it may have been, was not comparable in terms of intensity to that experienced in the Outer Hebrides or the Northern Isles. That, in essence, is what this investigation will set out to discover.

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[1] For classic examples of the 'War' and 'Peace' schools see Crawford (1981:259-269) and Smith (2001:7-32); and Ritchie (1974:23-36) and Owen (2004:3-33) respectively.

[2] A recent spate of archaeological field-work in the Outer Hebrides has added considerably to our understanding of Norse settlement in that area. See Jennings & Kruse (2005:253-60) for a concise review.

Approach

The approach taken here will be both multi- and cross-disciplinary. Although the main focus will be on place-names, historical, archaeological and environmental material will also be used to help re-evaluate the socio-political context of Norse settlement. Unless the circumstances of settlement are assessed in terms of contemporary norms and not just received clichés, the resulting explanatory models are unlikely to be satisfactory. With most of the available evidence post-dating the Norse period, the approach will also be largely retrospective in nature. As it is only through an awareness of post-Norse developments that the available evidence can be properly filtered and understood, due regard will therefore be paid to post-Norse settlement history.

While it would be desirable to include every part of the Inner Hebrides in this study, the size of the area and sheer volume of data it would yield points instead to the efficacy of a smaller, more localised investigation. Although several areas were considered, including Colonsay and Jura, the most suitable candidate was felt to be Islay.

The isle of Islay offers a number of advantages over its neighbours for a project of this type. It provides a conveniently defined geographical framework and a substantial yet manageable body of data. This data includes a relatively well developed series of local rentals and charters which provide a comparatively sound basis for the analysis of Norse settlement. It also presents a series of anomalies – such as the enigmatic Islay 'Quarterland' extent and the unusually high concentration of Norse *-bólstaðr* and Gaelic *cill-* names – which gives considerable scope for the conceptual re-evaluation of settlement history. Finally, as Islay is known to have been a seat of political power in both the later medieval and Early Historic periods, it is perhaps more likely than its less significant neighbours to have drawn the attentions of the incoming Norse.

Definitions

'Norse' and 'Native' – the use of ethnic labels

Without detailed sociological and political evidence it would be impossible to reconstruct the exact ethnic or political affiliations of any population group (*cf.* Hadley 2002:46, & FN 2). When it comes to the various groups involved in the Norse colonisation of Islay, however, it is reasonable to assume that one of the defining characteristics of ethnic identity was language. In early medieval Britain generally, there appears to have been a close link between concepts of ethnicity and language. In the late 7th century law code of King Ine of Wessex, for example, a binary ethnic division is made between the English and the Welsh on the basis of language spoken (*cf.* Charles Edwards 1995:733). Similarly, in his early 8th century *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Bede stresses that there are four peoples in Britain: each defined by its own language (McClure & Collins 1995:10-12). Thus a speaker of British was a Briton, English an Angle, Irish a Scot, Pictish a Pict and presumably therefore Norse a Norseman.

While this situation had changed dramatically by the later Middle Ages, when an ethnic Scot might also be a native speaker of English, annalistic references can still be found to the Hebrides as *Innse Gall*, or the 'Isles of the Foreigners', presumably because the population was (at one point) dominated by speakers of a language other than Gaelic – in this particular case, Norse (see Chapter 3). That is not to say that the ethnic identity and political affiliations of Islay's Norse-speaking population were inseparable from those of their contemporaries in Norway or elsewhere in the Norse-speaking world. As in Iceland, conscious distinctions will most probably have arisen at a relatively early stage (*cf.* Karlsson 2000:62-5). The 'Norse period' in Islay's settlement history can nevertheless be taken as the years during which the Norse language was used idiomatically by an established element of the local population.

Ethnic *designata*

It is reasonable in the context of this study to refer to a native speaker of Gaelic as a Gael. Even today, the core feature of the ethnonym 'Gael' is an ability to speak Gaelic (*cf.* Jennings 1996:96). But how should we refer to a native speaker of Norse? While the term 'Viking' is favoured by the archaeological community (*cf.* Dumville 1997:4 FN 11; Owen 2004), it will be used only sparingly here. In contemporary and near comtempotrary references, Scandinavian raiders in Scotland and Ireland are never referred to as 'Vikings' but *Genntibh* (OIr 'gentiles'),[3] *Gallibh/ Gall* (OIr 'foreigners/ strangers')[4] and occasionally *Danarios* (La 'Danes')[5] or *Normanni* (La 'Northmen').[6] That is not to doubt the existence or use of the word in Anglo-Saxon England or continental Europe during the 'Viking Age' (*cf.* Fell 1986:295-316, 1987:111-23). As a popular cliché, however, the term 'Viking' has now become so inseparable from the Romantic symbolism of the Victorian era that unqualified use serves only to straight-jacket thinking. While there may be certain contexts where the description of early medieval Scandinavians as 'Vikings' in the sense of 'pirates' is appropriate (*cf.* Dumville 1997:4), to talk of 'Viking' settlement is nevertheless something of an oxymoron. In general, once a pirate puts down roots and supports himself through farming, he is no longer a pirate, but a farmer (*cf.* Crawford 1987:1).

To call these individuals 'Scandinavian' is more acceptable. When investigating place-names and other linguistic phenomena, however, there is a need for greater precision. As detailed analysis of the dialects, place-names (Borgstrøm 1974:93) and 'Viking' artefacts of maritime Scotland (Shetelig 1940-54: Part I 55-57, Part V 13-79) have suggested that its principal Scandinavian element derived from the geographical area now known as Norway, the term of choice will be 'Norse'.

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[3] *eg.* AU 795.3 *Loscadh Rechrainne o geinntib & Sci do choscradh & do lomradh*: 'The burning of Rechru by the heathens, and Sci was overwhelmed and laid waste' (but see Chapter 3 for an alternate reading); AU 877.5 *Belliolum occ Loch Cuan eitir Finngenti & Dubgennti in quo Albann, dux na n-Dubgenti, cecidit*: 'A skirmish at Loch Cuan between the fair heathens and the dark heathens, in which Albann, king of the dark heathens, fell'. The implications of *Finngenti* and *Dubgennti* are discussed at length by Smyth (1974-7:101-17). See also Chapter 3.

[4] *eg.* AU 866.1 *Amlaiph & Auisle do dul i Fortrenn co n-Gallaib Erenn & Alban cor innriset Cruithentuaith n-uile & co tucsat a n-giallo*: 'Amlaib and Auisle went with the foreigners of Ireland and Scotland to Fortriu, plundered the entire Pictish country and took away hostages from them'.

[5] *eg.* SC 875 *Paulo post ab eo bello in xiiij eius facto in Dolair inter Danarios et* Scottos: 'Shortly afterwards, in his fourteenth year, a battle was fought by [Constantine son of Kenneth] at Dollar between Danes and Scots'.

[6] *eg.* SC 889-90 *Doniualdus filius Constantini tenuit regnum xi annos. Normanni tum uastauerunt Pictauiam*: 'Donald son of Constantine held the kingship for eleven years. The Northmen ravaged Pictavia then'.

Linguistic *designata*

Defining the language used by the Norse settlers of Islay is problematic. Although this will originally have been one of the varieties of Common Scandinavian (CSc) spoken in SW Norway *c.* 800 – *c.* 1050,[7] it may have survived long enough and remained in sufficiently close contact with the rest of the Norse-speaking world to develop into a form of Old West Norwegian, hereafter referred to as Old Norse (ON). While both sets of continua can and will be conveyed by the umbrella term 'Norse', this is not always appropriate. When reconstructing place-names, for example, it will be necessary for comparative reasons to treat all forms of this speech as normalised ON. This will not necessarily imply that the names in question were coined during the Old Norse period, *c.* 1050 – *c.* 1350 (Iversen 1973:1-2), but rather what they might have looked like if they were.

Similarly, when it comes to the language of immediately pre- and post Norse Islay, the term Gaelic will be used as an umbrella term for the range of Goidelic continua – from primitive and Old Irish to modern Scottish Gaelic – which are known or suspected to have been spoken on the island. The description of a place-name as Gaelic even when it is suspected to date to the Old or Middle Irish periods will also serve to reflect the diachronic linguistic changes which have taken place in the local dialect prior to my recording of its pronunciation in 2004.

Geographical *designata*

Although the modern geo-political entities of 'Norway', 'Scotland', 'Ireland' and 'the (Inner) Hebrides' did not come into being until long after the period under investigation came to a close, the names themselves provide a convenient geographical short-hand. Unless otherwise stated, it is in this capacity they will be used here.

Temporal framework

The temporal framework for this study will be the period during which the Norse language was used by a settled population in Islay. Defining what this might mean in terms of chronology, however, is far from straightforward. The traditional parameters of the 'Viking Age' are only partly relevant. As these are based on annalistic accounts of Scandinavian violence in Anglo-Saxon England – beginning in 793 with the 'ravages of heathen men [which] destroyed God's church on Lindisfarne' (ASC 793)[8] and ending in 1066 with the defeat of Harald *harðráði* (ON 'Hard-Ruler') Sigurðsson and his Norse invasion force by Harold Godwinsson at Stamford Bridge – they are only indirectly applicable to Islay and the Inner Hebrides. While it is possible to say that Islay's 'Viking Age' probably began around the same time – in connection perhaps with the raid on nearby Iona in 795 (Chapter 3) – it is clear from the military expeditions of Magnus *berfœtti* (ON 'Bareleg') Ólafsson in 1098 and 1102, Uspak Hákon in 1230 and

[7] As the originator of this term, Einar Haugen (1976:150), points out, 'Common Scandinavian' should not be seen as implying a single, uniform Scandinavian language, but rather 'an abstraction for the common elements in what were no doubt historically diverging dialects', comprising 'the pattern of innovations and retentions from [Germanic] which characterizes all the [Scandinavian] languages' – a concept more recently stressed by Barnes (1996:29-42).

[8] Or perhaps the less serious incident in Dorset around 787 involving 'men from Heredaland, probably Hoardland in Norway' (*cf.* Hines 1986:28).

Hákon IV Hákonarson in 1263 (Chapter 3) that Scandinavian violence in Islay and the Isles continued much longer. But even then, it is important to remember that these particular episodes were visited upon the local population by external agents and as such tell us very little about local language use or ethnic identity.

While the raid of 795 can be taken as a rough *terminus* for the beginning of Norse settlement in Islay, establishing when the Norse period came to an end is rather more problematic. The 'Isles to the west of Scotland' remained under Norwegian suzerainty until 1266 when they were ceded to Alexander III by Magnús *lagabœti* (ON 'Law-Mender') Hákonarson (APS:101-3). Many aspects of Hebridean culture at this point, particularly in sea-faring, military tactics, arms and armourments have demonstrably Scandinavian antecedence (*cf.* Caldwell 2004:71-85). The great and the good of mid 13th century Hebridean society may also have aspired to at least a working knowledge of ON for diplomatic reasons. It seems likely, however, that any residual sense of Norse ethnicity in the inner isles had long since fallen to nominal levels. By 1156, the Argyll based warlord Somhairle (Sorley/ Somerled) mac Ghilla-brigte had wrested control of the area from Guðrøðr Ólafsson of Man (MacDonald 1997:39-67). While it is quite possible that Somerled, whose name derives from ON *Sumarliði* 'summer warrior', was of mixed Celtic and Norse ancestry, there is some evidence to suggest that the man himself was an ethnic Gael (Sellar 1966:123-42). By the time his more immediate descendents found themselves in apposition to the increasingly Anglophone kingdom of Scotland, it was, moreover, as rulers of the self-consciously Gaelic-speaking polity known first as the Kingdom and later as the Lordship of the Isles.

Unlike Orkney or the isle of Man with their myriad runic inscriptions, the only direct evidence we have for the idiomatic, non-diplomatic use of Norse by the inhabitants of Islay are the numerous Norse place-names which still form a significant part of the local nomenclature. As these remain to be studied, defining the temporal framework of this investigation must therefore be considered part of the problem.

SECTION I: CONTEXT

Introduction to Section I

Before the study of Islay's Norse place-names can begin in earnest, it is first of all necessary to contextualise Norse settlement. The purpose of this section, therefore, will be to establish, as far as the evidence allows, the background against which this process is likely to have taken place. Chapter 1 will focus on the location and physical environment of Islay, highlighting any features which may have made it more attractive to Norse colonists than the surrounding areas. Chapter 2 will attempt to establish a profile for the native community, concentrating on their ethnicity, institutions, settlement sites and any other factors which might help to reconstruct their subsequent interaction with the incoming Norse. This will be followed in Chapter 3 with a review of the available evidence for Norse settlement in Islay specifically and how this can be rationalised in terms of the documentary accounts of Norse activity in western maritime Scotland generally.

CHAPTER 1: THE ISLE OF ISLAY

1.1 Location

The isle of Islay lies at the southernmost extremity of the Inner Hebridean archipelago (Figure 1).[9] Although up to 32km wide from E to W and 40km from N to S, Islay's roughly pentagonal landmass is deeply indented by the sea lochs Gruinart in the N and Indaal in the S – giving it a total area of 61,497 Ha (*c.* 615km^2). While this makes it smaller than many of Scotland's post 1994 local authorities, it is nevertheless the second largest of the 151 named islands of the Inner Hebrides[10] after Mull (*c.* 891km^2); and while smaller than the Orkney islands (*c.* 991km^2), similar in size to the Isle of Man (*c.* 570km^2).[11]

With travel to Glasgow, the nearest city, taking in excess of four hours by boat and road, Islay can reasonably be considered peripheral. In pre-industrial times, however, when the population of western Scotland was more evenly distributed, quite the opposite would have been true. Its location, *c.* 25km to the W of Kintyre and *c.* 40km to the N of Antrim in Ireland, allows easy access to the sea-ways of western Britain and Ireland. Moreover, with Islay's safe havens being the last before the dangerous currents of the North Channel, its inhabitants would have been well placed to control transit between the Hebrides and the Irish Sea.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 Geology

In geological terms Islay is by far the most varied of the Inner Hebrides. This is partly because of its size and partly because it straddles several geological fault-lines. The most significant of these, known as the Loch Gruinart Fault, splits the island into two relatively distinct geological zones: a western area incorporating the cigar-shaped Rhinns peninsula together with the alluvial plain between lochs Gruinart and Indaal; and an eastern area comprising the main body of the island and the sub-rectangular Oa peninsula at its SW extremity (*cf.* Wilkinson *et al.* 1907:10). While the bulk of the eastern area is dominated by quartzites, slates and phyllites of the Dalriadan group, the so-called Loch Skerrols Shear Zone, which borders on the Loch Gruinart Fault, is based on sandstones of the Bowmore group.[12] The neighbouring, western area can also be subdivided into two relatively distinct parts. While the northern

[9] The 'Inner Hebrides', as defined by modern geographers such as Morton Boyd (1983:8), comprise all of the islands to the West of the Scottish mainland in the irregular area bounded by: Rubha Hunish, in Skye, in the N (57°30'N); the Mull of Oa, in Islay, in the S (55°34'N); Skerrynore, to the W of Tiree, in the W (07°29'W); and Kyle Rhea, in Skye, in the E (05°44'W). This area is generally contrasted with the 'Outer Hebrides', which comprise the 'Long Island' from Lewis in the N, to Berneray in the S. While this means that the Isle of Skye is now routinely associated with the Inner Hebrides, there is considerable evidence to suggest that its closest pre- and proto-historic connections lay with the Outer Isles (*cf.* Kruse Forthcoming:162-5). To avoid confusion, therefore, the unqualified term 'Hebrides' will be used in this thesis to indicate the 'Inner Hebrides' minus Skye, while the terms 'Western Isles' and the 'Long Island' will be used as a collective term for the Outer Isles. Whenever it is more convenient to list Skye with one of these groups, its inclusion will be specifically stated.

[10] See Morton Boyd (1983:8).

[11] Data on Scottish islands and island groups from http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/files/occasional-paper-10-table1.pdf (accessed 20 March 2003). Data on Isle of Man from http://www.gov.im/isleofman/geography.xml (accessed 20 March 2003).

[12] A useful glossary of geological terminology and the modern designations for Islay's rock groups is provided by Maltman *et al.* (2000:1-11 & 53-7).

half is dominated by sedimentary rocks of the Colonsay group, the southern half is based predominantly on igneous and meta igneous rocks of the Rhinns Complex (*cf.* Maltman *et al.* 2000:9-12; See also Figure 2).

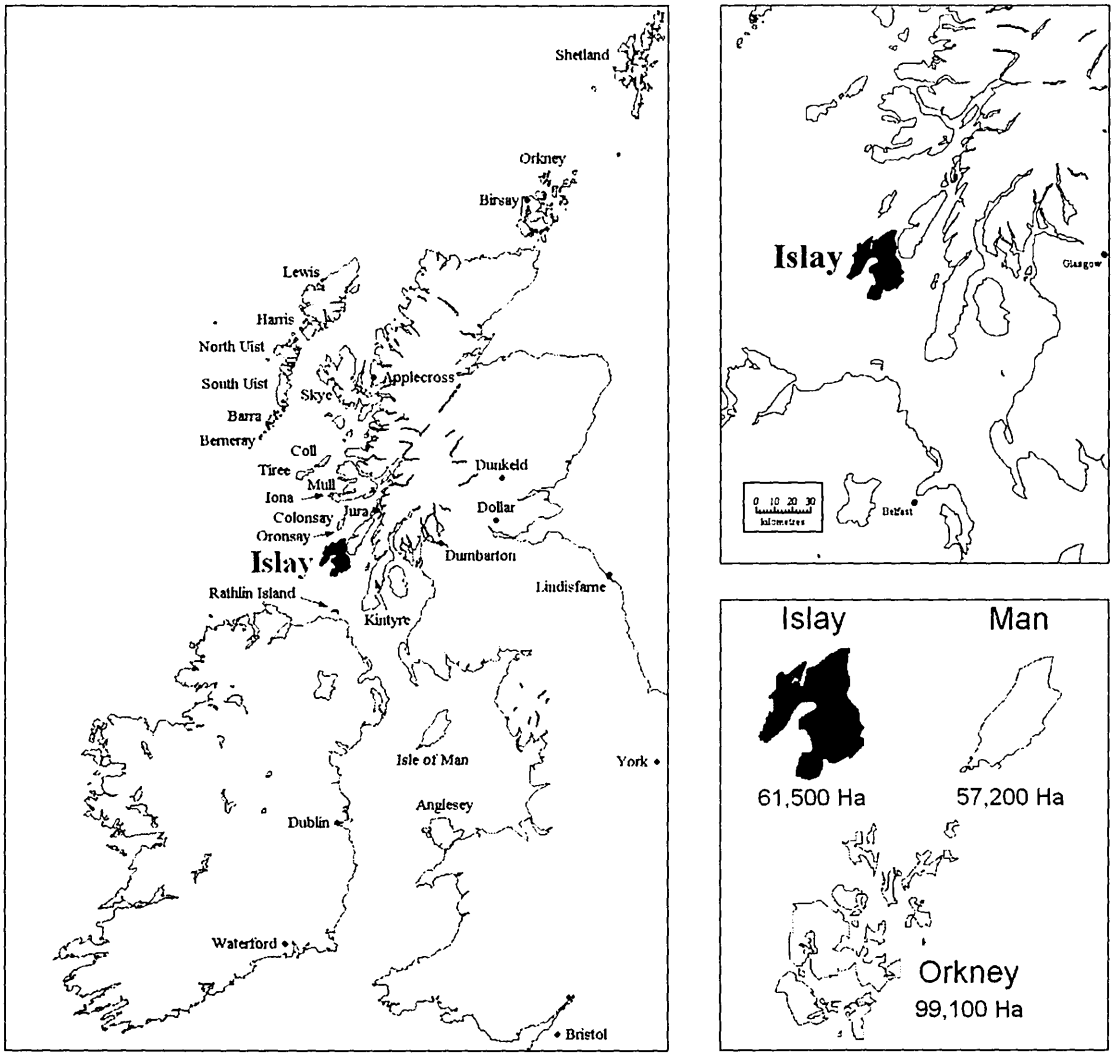


Figure 1: Isle of Islay – Context & relative size

The bedrock of both the western and eastern areas alike is intersected in a NE-SW direction by intrusive dykes, basic rocks and large masses (Harker 1941:28) mainly of meta-gabbro and meta igneous rocks. Most notable, however, are the bodies of limestone and other calcareous material which surface near Bolsa in far NW and continue at irregular intervals to the Mull of Oa in the S.[13] The concentration and composition of the Islay limestone, which is up to 95% pure calcium carbonate, is highly unusual in a Hebridean context – with large tracts of limestone derived soils greatly increasing the overall fertility of the island. While not particularly well regarded as building material, it is known to have been used extensively for agricultural purposes since the 17th century (*cf.* Wilkinson 1907:76-7; Martin 2002:147;

[13] See British Geological Survey Solid and Drift Edition 1:50,000 Provisional Series: South Islay: Scotland Sheet 19; North Islay: Scotland Sheet 27.

Simmons 1998:217). Veins of lead, silver and manganese ore which permeate the limestone are also known to have been exploited on an irregular basis since at least the 16th century and possibly much earlier (Gribble 1983:612; Cressey 1996).

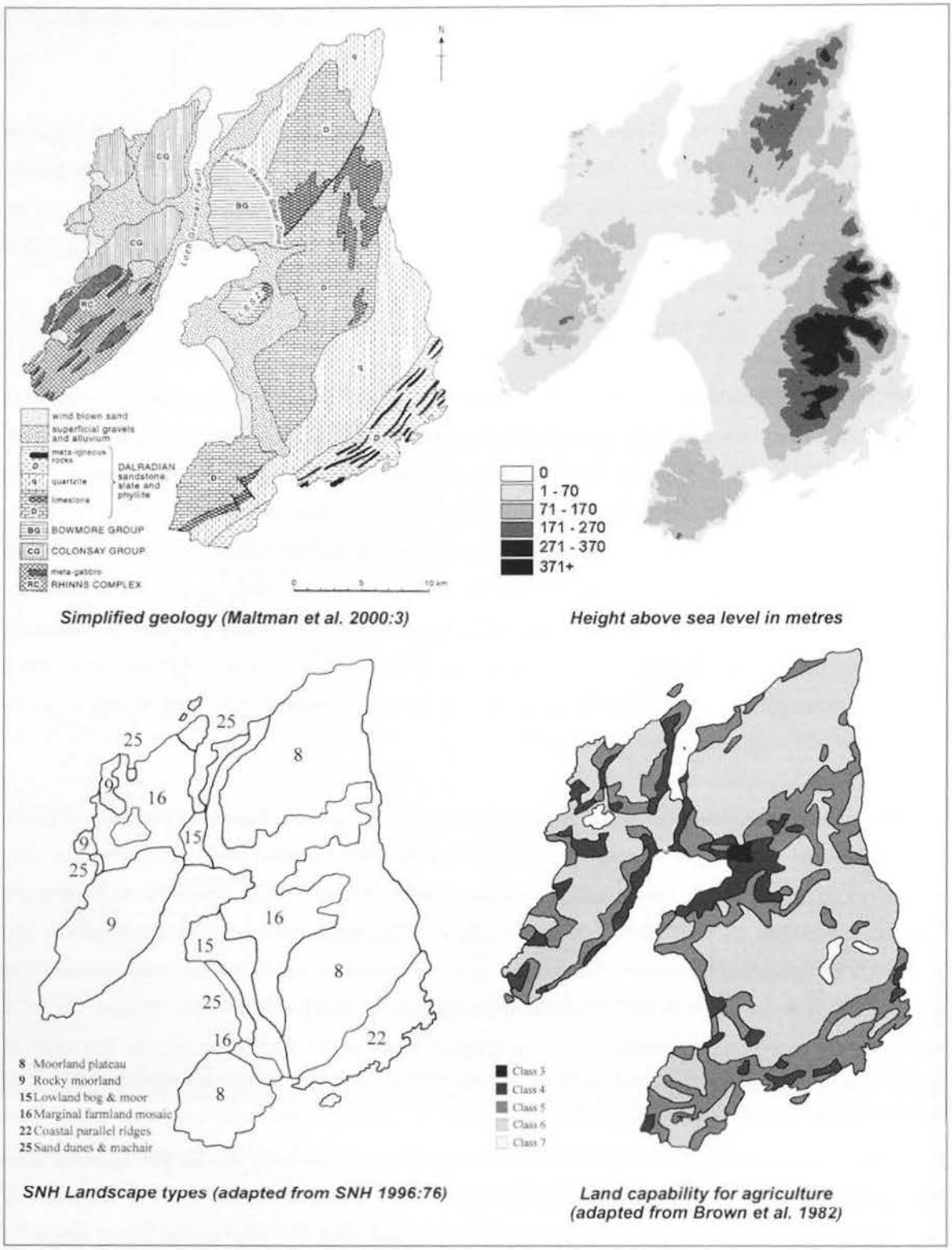
Superficial deposits – which include glacial, post-glacial, fluvo-glacial and fluvial materials – can be found in most parts of the island, albeit rarely in the far SE. In addition to this, large concentrations of shell-sand machair dominate the areas around Lossit, Kilchoman and Smaull on the W coast of the Rhinns, Ardnave and Killinallan at the mouth of Loch Gruinart and an elongated strip between Laggan in Kilarrow and Kintra in Kildalton.

1.2.2 Landscape

Islay's geological complexity is mirrored by that of the overlying landforms. The effects of glaciation, weather, waves and human activity have combined to shape these into one of the most varied landscapes for an area of this size in Scotland. A recent assessment on behalf of Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH 1996) identified 6 distinct landscape types in Islay: 'Type 8: Moorland plateau'; 'Type 9: Rocky moorland'; 'Type 15: Lowland bog and moor'; 'Type 16: Marginal farmland mosaic'; 'Type 22: Coastal parallel ridges'; 'Type 25: Sand-dunes and machair' – with types 9 and 15 being considered unique to the island (SNH 1996: Annex B pp.24-65). It should be noted, however, that the map produced to accompany this assessment (Figure 2) suffers from a high degree of levelling, with many relatively fertile areas, especially around the E coast of the Rhinns and the far SE of the western area, being shown simply as 'rocky moorland' and 'coastal parallel ridges'.

As can be seen from Figure 2 below, the larger, eastern part of the island is framed by two areas of barren quartzitic upland. Of these, the southern range, which reaches 491m in Beinn Bheigier, is by far the more extensive and exposed, with several peaks in excess of 400m. In the N, only Sgrabh Breac (364m) and Giùr bheinn (318m) exceed 300m. Extensive erosion of the softer rocks between these uplands has resulted in a wide belt of lower and more gently undulating land stretching from Port Askaig in the NE to the Mull of Oa in the SW. The central part of this area, known locally as 'The Glen' (Storrie 1997:17), comprises the upper drainage basin of the river Laggan, much of the Sorn basin and the lion share of Islay's best farm land.

While the eastern area is separated from the Rhinns to the W by the low-lying alluvial flats between lochs Gruinart and Indaal, most of the Rhinns itself can be classified as upland plateaux. Even so, the landform varies greatly between the northern and southern halves of the peninsula. Whereas the higher ground in the N forms an effective basin around Loch Gorm, with spurs extending towards Tón Mhór in the N and Ardnave point in the NW, that in the S rises steadily from Loch Indaal to form an indented dorsal ridge culminating in Beinn Tart a'Mhill at 232m. As with the eastern area, this western part of the island is dotted with freshwater bodies. At the last count there were around 230 of these, ranging in size from Loch Gorm at just over 2.6 km^2 to numerous, much smaller ponds and moorland pools (Ogilvie 2003:13).



Simplified geology (Maltman et al. 2000:3)

Height above sea level in metres

SNH Landscape types (adapted from SNH 1996:76)

Land capability for agriculture (adapted from Brown et al. 1982)

Figure 2: Simplified geology, topography, and land capability for agriculture

1.2.3 Seascape

Lochs Gruinart and Indaal aside, the coastline of Islay is only slightly indented and at *c.* 227km (Mithen 2000:39) relatively short by Hebridean standards. It is, however, no less varied than the landscape it frames. The 'seascapes' of Islay range from the broad bays of Loch Indaal and the machair and sand-dunes of Laggan Bay, to the dramatic 100m+ cliffs of the Mull of Oa. Of special note are the shattered parallel crags between Port Ellen and Ard Talla in the far SE which terminate seawards in a series of islands and skerries. Although the bulk of Islay's off-lying islands are concentrated here, there are numerous other stacks, skerries and islets around its coast. The largest of these are Texa to the S of Laphroaig in Kildalton parish, Nave Island off the N coast of the Rhinns and Orsay off Portnahaven in the S. None are larger than 100 Ha.

Notwithstanding this variety, large stretches of the coast, including most of the Rhinns and the northern and eastern sides of the island, are raised and almost uniformly rocky. This has negative implications for the beaching and anchoring of ships and boats. Similarly, with loch Gruinart being too shallow for navigation, only the head of Loch Indaal, Portnahaven and a few places along the southern and eastern coasts are now considered to offer any real protection from the winds and currents of the North Atlantic (Haswel-Smith 1999:40).

1.3 Climate

Although several different climatic regions have been identified in Islay, the lower-lying and coastal areas, which support the largest part of the island's population and 'mosaic farming' communities, belong to Birse *et al.*'s (1970) 'warm and wet' and 'warm and moist' categories. This compares favourably with the rest of the Inner Hebrides, which share with Shetland and the Faroes 'the most maritime climate in Europe' (Green & Harding 1983:121-2). While Islay boasts the highest maximum air temperatures of this group, with a mean average of 12°C recorded at Port Ellen between 1964 and 1977, its hilly profile makes it slightly less sunny on average than Tiree (Holley 2000:7), but also slightly less prone to the westerly Atlantic winds which ravage its more northerly neighbour at gale force speeds on an average of 35 days a year (Green & Harding 1980:121-2; Storrie 1997:21).

Annual rainfall is in excess of 120cm pa in the lowlands[14] and 240 cm in the highland parts of the island (Green & Harding 1983) – less than might be expected in many mainland areas of the British Isles. Moreover, although precipitation is distributed unevenly throughout the year, with more rain falling more often between October and March than during the summer months (*cf.* Storrie 1996:21), the minimal annual variation in air temperature of less than 5°C (Green & Harding 1983:130) means it rarely falls as snow in lowland areas or results in fog (Storrie 1997:21). In practical terms, these factors combine to give the lowlands of Islay a surprisingly long growing season of 250 days per year (Green & Harding

[14] http://www.zetnet.co.uk/sigs/weather/scotclim/scot_rain.htm (accessed 25 March 2003).

1983:131). Interestingly, there is some evidence to suggest that the climate may have been even more favourable during at least the latter part of the Viking Age (*cf.* Green & Harding 1983:137).

1.4 Fauna, flora and farming

1.4.1 Wildlife

The wide variety of habitats provided by Islay's richly varied land- and seascapes support the highest level of species diversity in the Inner Hebrides. Recent surveys have identified 10 species of freshwater fish (Campbell & Williamson 1983; Berry 1983:437), 22 species of land mammal (Berry 1983) and at least 150 species of resident bird (*cf.* Ogilvie 2003:11). In addition to this, the seas around Islay are home to a wide variety of fish (Morton Boyd & Boyd 1990:74-9), shellfish (Smith 1983; Mason *et al.* 1983) and marine mammals (*cf.* Vaughan 1983; Morton Boyd & Boyd 1990:84-90). Although large stocks of deer, game-fowl, salmon and trout are actively managed for hunting purposes, no such use is currently made of the vast flocks of sea-birds (Ogilvie 2003) and wild-fowl (Ogilvie 1983) or the significant numbers of grey and common seals (Vaughan 1983) which live, breed or over-winter on the island. Given the similar levels of species diversity suggested by the accounts of travellers such as Monro in 1549 (Munro 2002:309-10), Martin in *c.* 1695 (Martin 2002:149) and Pennant in 1772 (Simmons 1998:218), it would be surprising if these resources did not play an important part in the island's pre-modern subsistence economy.

1.4.2 Vegetation

1.4.2.1 Woodland

Unusually for a Hebridean island, Islay still supports a significant amount of native woodland. Given the acidic nature of much of Islay's bedrock, its general character is typical of that which develops on acidic and neutral soils. Oak (*Quercus spp.*), birch (*Betula spp.*), sallow (*Salix spp.*) and rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) are most prominent, with hazel (*Corylus avellana*) occurring amongst oak and birch stands (Ball 1983:332-3). Heavy grazing by sheep and rabbits has reduced the field-layer in all of these stands to grassy associations or bracken – in particular the oceanic ferns *Dryopteris aemula* and *Hymenophyllum spp* (Ball 1983:333-4). While no native ash (*Fraxinus spp.*) have been recorded in recent years, their presence along the east coast of nearby Jura raises the possibility they were once found on Islay.

As a rule, woodland is more extensive where undulations in the landscape provide shelter from the strong westerly winds and the concomitant salt spray from the sea. On the exposed west-facing coasts of the island wind-pruned stands of oak, birch and hazel and birch can be found in the valleys and ravines where the Duich, Machrie and Glenegedale rivers drain into Laggan Bay (Ball 1983:334). Only the oak-birch stand at Braigo is more westerly – making it one of the most westerly natural woods in the British Isles (Ball 1983:334). The woods on the east coast, being more sheltered and on slightly more fertile ground,

are taller and more extensive. At around 1500 Ha, the Atlantic oak-woods around Callumkill, Kildalton and Ardmore in Kildalton are some of the most extensive in Europe.[15]

The survival of this woodland to the present day points to effective management in pre- and proto-historic times. Excavation of the Lordship centre on Eilean Mor in Loch Finlaggan has shown that wood was used extensively during the later medieval period for floorboards and palisades (Caldwell & Ewart 1993:152-4). Analysis of timbers retrieved from the crannog (see Chapter 2) which forms the basis of the adjacent Eilean na Comhairle suggests that the same was true in the prestige structures of the pre-Norse period (*cf.* Caldwell 2001:173). It can nevertheless be assumed that local timber was supplemented for building purposes with drift wood (*cf.* Holley 2000:12 & 15) and wood imported from adjacent mainland areas. According to Adomnán in his *Vita Columbae* (II:45), the 6th century monks on nearby Iona acquired oak timbers for building work along the River Shiel and on Eilean Shona in Loch Moydart (Sharpe 1995:146, N340). There is no reason why the contemporary inhabitants of Islay might not have had similar arrangements.

1.4.2.2 Peat

Even more conspicuous than the native woodland is the omnipresent Islay peat, which has traditionally been exploited as a source of fuel – both domestically and otherwise – and more recently as a source of flavouring for the distinctive local whiskies. In total, blanket peats and peaty gleys cover around half of the island's land surface (*cf.* Hudson & Henderson 1983:12). While the formation of peat is reliant on high levels of precipitation, low levels of evaporation and poor drainage – which occur naturally in large parts of Islay – it has been argued that much of the Inner Hebridean blanket peat is a direct result of human activity. The introduction of small particles of charcoal to soils from the deliberate firing of woodlands or heath, for example, can increase water retention, making even porous, sandy soils retain water and susceptible to peat formation (*cf.* Holley 2000:12-3). Although detailed palynological work at Loch a'Bhogaidh in the Rhinns (Edwards & Berridge 1994) suggests that this process was well underway by the first millennium BC, there appear to have been several subsequent periods when climatic deterioration, primitive farming methods or a combination of both have led to further expansion in peat coverage (*cf.* Bond 1997:1257-66). The end result of this process has been the creation of large tracts of infertile, acidic and poorly drained soils supporting only a limited range of vegetation.

1.4.3 Soils & farming

The large parts of Islay which are not covered in peat display a wide variety of soil-types.[16] In areas where these are derived from underlying limestone, such as the SE part of the former Kilmeny parish, they can be surprisingly fertile – more so, in fact, that most other places in the Hebrides and comparable with those in the more fertile parts of the mainland. In practise, however, the suitability of even the most fertile soils for agriculture is affected by a number of other factors, including: landform, climate and

[15] See, *Argyll and the Isles: Description* http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/nhf/nhf-14/nhf-14b.pdf (accessed on 21 May 2005).
[16] See the Soil Survey for Scotland's *Provisional Soil Map for Islay*, based on Sheet 60 of the OS 1:50,000 scale series.

drainage (*cf.* Hudson & Henderson 1983). Land Capability for Agriculture in Islay, as in Scotland generally, has been assessed by the MacAulay Institute for Soil Sciences on a 7 point scale ranging from class 1 – 'Land capable of producing a very wide range of crops' – to class 7 – 'Land of very limited agricultural value' – with varying numbers of sub-divisions in each (Bibby 1982:12-15).

With its extensive tracts of blanket peat and distinctly non-uniform landscape, it is perhaps not surprising that no part of Islay is rated higher than class 3:1 on the Institute's scale – 'Land capable of producing consistently high yields of a narrow range of crops and/or moderate yields of a wider range'. While there are also large expanses of class 4 land in Islay – the lower limit for arable production (Bibby 1982:11) – by far the greater part of the island has been assessed as classes 5 and 6 – fit at the best for rough grazing (Bibby 1982:14). But while it should be noted in an Argyll context that this is bettered only by Bute – where almost 50% of the land has been assessed as class 3 – it would be unwise to simply accept these modern classifications when assessing relative arable potential in pre-modern times.

When identifying land with the highest potential for arable output today, the MacAulay Institute gives major consideration to the practicalities of modern farming. To be assessed in the highest categories, land has to consist of extensive, contiguous areas of deep, light, calcareous soil with good drainage and few or no stones near the surface. The land is also required to be flat or only lightly sloping – to allow for the efficient use of modern farm machinery – and capable of supporting a very wide range of arable crops including wheat.

When it comes to the Middle Ages, however, research has shown that agricultural practises and technology favoured the exploitation of a much wider range of land types (*cf.* Alcock & Alcock 1987:137). Indeed, traces of rig and furrow cultivation marks have been identified in parts of Argyll which are now considered fit at best for rough grazing (Nieke 1984:27). Furrows turned by spade or basic, horse drawn ploughs were viable on gradients at which only expensive, specialised equipment can be used today (Bibby *et al.* 1982:3). Similarly, while the cutting power of these earlier technologies was comparatively limited and certainly less efficient than modern farm machinery, it also allowed shallower soils to be taken into cultivation than would be possible using modern, tractor pulled ploughs. This is one reason why the shell-sand soils of the Hebridean machair, for example, appear to have been favoured by early agriculturalists over the heavier but more stable soils of certain inland areas.[17] Neither, from a medieval perspective, was agricultural potential much reduced by non-contiguity of arable land. On the contrary, when the prevailing system of agriculture was based on dispersed 'rigs' (*cf.* Caldwell 2001:69-71), a landscape which afforded gaps in the cultivated area might even have been regarded as beneficial. It must also be remembered that the economic basis of early medieval farming is unlikely to have required the production of large surpluses of grain for trade or export. Even in areas of intrinsically high land quality, the extent of arable exploitation may have been limited by such practical considerations as

[17] See Sharples & Parker Pearson (1999) for an account of just such a scenario on the Outer Hebridean island of South Uist.

feeding the farm workers (*cf.* Durrenberger 1991). Finally, it is unlikely that land would be considered less valuable simply because it was inca[18]pable of sustaining the very wide variety of crops required of modern arable. Studies in Ireland, Scandinavia and Shetland have suggested that the arable mainstays of the Atlantic region during the Middle Ages were often limited to oats, barley and in some places flax (*cf.* Edwards 1990:49-67; Myrdal 1993:3-5; Bond & Hunter 1997:175-81).

Taken as a whole, these provisos would explain why Islay, with its large tracts of limestone derived soils, was previously known by such epithets as *Bannrigh* or 'Queen' of the Hebrides and *An t'Eilean Uaine* or 'the Green Island' (Martin 2002:151; Storrie 1997:3). As late as 1573, Abraham Ortelius felt moved to note on the reverse of his map of Scotland – one of the earliest printed – that '[o]f all [the Hebrides] the greatest and most renowned is Ila, fertile for grain and rich in minerals' (Storrie 1997:3).[19] While the population of Islay is now just under 3,500, it is further testament to the island's fertility that by 1841, at a time when much of the best land was given over to the production of fodder for the gentleman farmers' stocks of black cattle (*cf.* Sinclair 1983:388; Storrie 1997:61-2; Caldwell 2001:67-9), the figure was a fraction under 15,000 (Darling 1955:83).

1.5 Conclusion

Although peripheral, sparsely populated and relatively unproductive by modern standards, Islay's early medieval inhabitants would have regarded it as neither. Despite its many peat-bogs, barren quartzite hills and otherwise irregular land-forms, Islay's large tracts of limestone-, forest- and shell-sand-derived soils would have been particularly appealing to primitive agriculturalists – more so, in fact, than neighbouring islands or the likely homelands of its Norse colonists (*cf.* Brun Tschudi 1977:185-204). Moreover, the pivotal location of the island, at the northern approach to the North Channel, would have given them access to the sea-ways of western Britain and Ireland and the potential to control transit between the Hebrides and the Irish Sea. It was arguably this combination of relative fertility and strategic importance which attracted Somerled mac Ghilla-brigte to the island in the mid 12th century and saw it established as the epi-centre of the Mac Sorley Kingdom of the Isles. The same factors are unlikely to have escaped the attentions of the early medieval Norse.

[18] According to the 2001 UK Government Census, the population of Islay was 3,457. See http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/files/occasional-paper-10-table1.pdf (accessed 20 March 2003).

[19] *Maxima omnium & nominatissima Ila est, frumenti ferax, & metalli dives* (Ortelius, A. (1573): *Scotiae Tabula in Theatrum orbis Terrarum*).

CHAPTER 2: SETTLEMENT & SOCIETY *C.* AD 800

2.1 Introduction

It is clear from the archaeological record that Islay's rich and varied landscape had supported a human population for a very long time before the Norse arrived. The recent discovery of a 'tanged point' flint tool at Bridgend, for example, points to human activity in the late glacial or early post-glacial period around 10,000 years ago (Edwards & Mithen 1994-5:357-61). We cannot be sure if permanent settlement began then or a couple of thousand years later (*cf.* RCAHMS 1984:2-5). Turn the clock forward to *c.* AD 800, however – and the eve of Islay's 'Viking Age' – and we can be absolutely certain that the island was fully occupied by a settled population.

2.2 The documentary record

While the written evidence for proto-historic Islay (*c.* AD 500 – *c.* 1200) includes contemporary and near contemporary material from at least as far back as the 7th century AD, there is none at all from the five decades preceding the Norse 'raid' on Iona in AD 795 (AI 795). This puts the surveyor of settlement and society in Islay at that time in the unfortunate position of having to glean information from earlier sources and project it forwards to fill the gap. The collection and compression of temporally disparate fragments of information in this way raises a number of methodological issues. Providing such an overview is restricted to general trends, however, and the potential for distortion and anachronism is made clear, there is no reason why it should not be done. The results may be more speculative than might ideally be hoped for, but short of ignoring the documentary sources completely, there is no real alternative.

The earliest likely reference to Islay is made by the Alexandrian scholar Claudius Ptolemy. In his early 2nd century AD geographical treatise *Geographia*, Ptolemy mentions a group of five islands to the N of *Ivernia* – 'northern Ireland' (Watson 1926:37) – to which he refers collectively as *Eboudai* – 'the Inner Hebrides' (Watson 1926:37; Rivet & Smith 1979:131-2). These are catalogued from NW to SE as: *Eboudi*, *Eboudi* (*sic.*), *Rhicina* or *Eggarikenna*, *Malaois* and *Epidion* (Watson 1926:37; Rivet & Smith 1978:131). While only one of them, *Malaois* or Mull, can be identified with any certainty (Watson 1926:37; Rivet & Smith 1978:132), the relative position of *Epidion* at the extreme SE of the *Eboudai* puts it in the same general area we would expect to find Islay. Although the two names are quite different, the probability that Islay and *Epidion* are one and the same is heightened by the geographical and linguistic proximity of *Epidion* to the nearby *Epidion akron* (Kintyre peninsula). The two share the same root – the ethnonym *Epidii* meaning 'horse people' – which Ptolemy gives to the people living around Kintyre (Rivet & Smith 1979:140; Watson 1926:23-4&37). As Islay, which is also adjacent to Kintyre, is traditionally famed for its horse-raising,[20] there are at least tentative grounds for equating it with Epidion.

[20] A saying recorded by Watson in 1926 (p.37) has it that 'an Islay man will carry a saddle and a bridle a mile to ride half a mile'.

Whether the islanders were Gaelic-speaking at this point is difficult to say. With the place-name *Epidion* and the ethnonym *Epidii* appearing to be P-Celtic or Brythonic in origin, they provide some corroboration for origin myths claiming that Argyll was first settled by Gaelic speakers from Ireland around AD 500 (*cf.* Watson 1926:213-24; Bannerman 1974:69-70, 123-4; Dumville 2002:185-97). As recent excavations at Dunadd – the likely *caput regiones* or 'capital' of the area (*cf.* Sharpe 1995:132, 291) – have produced no evidence of societal re-alignment at this time (Lane & Campbell 2000; Campbell 2001), however, it is possible that this early, Brythonic character is more apparent than real.

It is not until the turn of the 8th century that we find the earliest reliable references to Islay. The appearance of 'Ilea insula' in II:23 of Adomnán of Iona's *Vita Columbae* (La 'Life of Columba'. See Sharpe 1995:172; Thomas 1875:207) can be taken alongside the report in AU 740.3 of 'An earthquake in Íle on the second of the Ides of April'[21] as evidence that the name is ultimately pre-Norse and possibly Celtic in origin.[22] As with many ancient names, however, the meaning is obscure. According to Watson (1926:87), it could be related to the Latin *ilium* (pl.), 'guts, loins, flanks', and the Welsh *ilio*, 'ferment', where the essential notion is 'to swell', implying a sense of 'big-flanked' or 'big bottomed' and pointing perhaps to the shape of the island. Although Watson supports this interpretation by reference to the island-name Arran, from G *Aru*, which has traditionally been interpreted as 'kidney' on account of its shape, this latter association has recently been called into question (*cf.* Fraser 1999:11). A more convincing explanation is provided by Thomas (1881-2:248) who suggests an etymology along the lines of the Welsh *Y-ledd* and the Gaelic *I-leithe*, both meaning 'the divided isle' and alluding to the virtual bisection of the island between Lochs Indaal and Gruinard. Unlike the epithet 'big bottomed', which would require a level of cartographic knowledge unavailable to the pre-map-making cultures of early medieval Argyll, the fact that the island is almost split in two is clear to anyone standing on the ridge of Cnoc Iolairean (29m) at the head of Loch Indaal.

The Irish annals provide several potentially earlier refernces to Islay or parts of it. And while the usefulness of these sources is open to question – either because they are not corroborated by the AU[23] or because the places in question cannot be identified with certainty – it is interesting to at least consider their implications here. Take, for example, the third entry from the *Annals of the Four Masters* under AD 565 (AFM 565.3). In it, we learn that 'A sea fleet was brought by Colman Beg, son of Diarmaid, son of Fearghus Cerrbheoil and by Conall, son of Comhgall, chief of Dal Riada, to Sol and Ile, and they carried off many spoils from them'. Although brief, this entry suggests that either the island itself or its inhabitants were considered politically important. While it is clearly significant that the attack was led by the 'chief' of Dalriada, it is perhaps even more noteworthy that it was deemed important enough for inclusion in the annals at all.

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[21] AU 740.3 *Terrimotus in Ili .ii. id Aprilis*

[22] A fairly comprehensive list of pre-20th century forms of the island-name is provided by Thomas (1881-2:247-8). The list of possible pre-Norse examples is completed by the 'nÍle' of the *Miniugud Senchasa Fher nAlban* (see below) and the possible corruptions *Elavania* and *Birila* of the anonymous 7th century *Ravenna Cosmography* (*cf.* Rivet & Smith 1979:185-215).

[23] See, for example, Broun (1998:74 FN 16).

If the 6th century provenance of this account is accepted, the impression of political significance it attaches to Islay would appear to be strengthened by a pair of similar reports in the Annals of Ulster (AU) and the Annals from the Book of Leinster (BL). In these sources, the same raid seems to be given the slightly later date of AD 568. While the BL catalogues 'A battle in the western world (that is, in Seil and in Islay) [fought] by Colman Bec, D[iarmait's] son and by Conall, Comgall's son' (ESSH I:72),[24] AU tells of 'An expedition into Iardoman ['the western world'] by Colmán Bec son of Diarmait, and by Conall son of Comgall'.[25] The omission of the place-names 'Sóil' and 'Íli' from the AU version raises the possibility of the AU entry for AD 567 recording 'A campaign in *n-Iardamon*'[26] also being a reference to Islay. While Watson (1926:40-2) prefers to equate the *damon* element in this name with Ptolemy's *Dumna* – a name which both Watson and Rivet & Smith (1979:342) equate with the Long Island – Anderson (ESSH I:72) suggests that it might denote a larger district. Indeed, as the primary meaning of E.Celt **dumnos* is 'deep' (Watson 1926:40), it would perhaps be more appropriate to translate *n-Iardamon* as 'The Western Ocean' – and see it as a (partial) fore-runner of the later Norse *Suðreyjar* or the MacSorley Kingdom of the Isles (Chapter 3). If this is accepted, it would be interesting to speculate that Islay, with its pivotal location, and Seil, with its documented supply of (ship) building timber (Watson 1926:75-6), may have been two of the more important centres in this 'Greater Dumnian' polity.

The political importance of Islay does not appear to have ended with Colmán's expedition. We learn from the Annals of Tigernach (AT) that sometime between AD 620 and 643 there was '[a] battle in Calathros, and in it Donald Brecc was conquered' (ESSH I:158).[27] While the location of this Calathros is by no means certain, it can reasonably be equated with the 'C<a>ladrois' associated with Islay in the later medieval text now known as the *Míniugud Senchasa Fher nAlban* ('The Explanation of the Genealogy of the (Gaelic) Men of Britain'. See below).[28] As Domnall Brecc was the head of the leading family group in Dalriada, the *Cenél* ('kindred') *nGabráin* (see below), his presence on the island must be considered significant. As he was also the king of Dalriada, the stakes in such a symbolic battle would have been high, amounting perhaps to the kingship itself. That Ferchar – king of the rival *Cenél Comgaill* in Cowall – is recorded as reigning jointly with Domnall from the following year suggests that he may have initiated the attack for this very reason (*cf.* Caldwell 2001:23).

While the choice of Islay as the battleground could indicate a regular aristocratic presence, an acknowledged strategic advantage or mere coincidence, a similar account from the first half of the 8th century makes the last of these three possibilities seem less likely. According to AU 736.2, the 'battle of Cnoc Cairpri in Calathros at Etarlinde between Dál Riata and Foirtriu' resulted in 'Talorgan son of Fergus [and brother of Angus] [going] in pursuit of Ainfchellach's son who had taken flight, many nobles falling

[24] *Fecht i nlardomon, .i. i Sóil 7 i nÍli, la Colman mBec mac n D(iarmato) 7 la Conall mac Comgaill* (Watson 1926:41).
[25] AU 568.1 *Fecht i n-Iardoman la Colman m-Bec m. n-Diarmato & Conall mc. Comgaill.*
[26] AU 567.2 *Fecht in n-Iardamon.*
[27] Anderson (ESSH I:158) places this entry around AD 635.
[28] For the purposes of brevity, this text will hereafter be refered to as the *Senchus fer nAlban* or simply the *Senchus*. While Dumville's (2002:197-8) objections to this practise are noted and will be discussed below, it offers little scope for confusion in the context of this thesis.

in this encounter'. As Anderson (ESSH I:233) points out, this passage could mean either that the battle was fought at a location between the areas known as Dalriada (Arygll) and Fortriu (a leading Pictish province) or that it was fought between the men of Dalriada and Fortriu at an unrelated location. Although Skene (1867:cxxxi) favoured the first explanation (*cf.* Watson 1926:105-6) – choosing to identify Calathros with Callendar in Falkirk – Anderson (ESSH I:234) has since shown this to be unlikely on linguistic grounds. Attention can moreover be drawn to the AT for the same year, which tell us that 'Angus, Fergus' son, king of the Picts, wasted the districts of Dalriata, and gained Dunadd, and burned Creic; and he bound with chains two sons of Selbach, namely Dungal and Feradach' (ESSH I:232-3). If the attack on Calathros in 736 is seen as a continuation of this campaign, its would seem more likely to have focused on nearby Islay than distant Callendar.[29] As Angus was king of the Picts and Muiredach king of Dalriada, it could therefore continue the precedent for battles involving major royal personages being fought on the island.

It has been argued that the name Calathros is Q-Celtic or Goidelic in origin. Anderson (ESSH I:234), for example, derives the initial element *Calath from OIr *calad* meaning 'hard', in contrast to the We cognate *kaled*. While these would be weak grounds for considering the Islay's 7th and 8th century populations to be Gaelic-speaking, further and much clearer evidence for just such a conclusion can be found in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae*.

The *Life of Columba* is played out against the background of the early historic 'kingdom' of Dalriada (Dál Riada, Dál Riata), an area roughly coterminous with the modern local authority of Argyll and Bute (*cf.* Bannerman 1974; Anderson 1973, 1980; Hudson 1994; Figure 3). The image that Adomnán paints of early medieval Argyll is of an entirely Gaelic world where all of the place and personal names are Irish. He refers to its people as the *Scotti*, or 'Irish in Britain', and presents Columba himself as such an unambiguous symbol for the region's Gaelic ethnicity that he needs an interpreter when travelling to Pictish speaking areas (Sharpe 1995:32). Whether the fine detail in the *Vita Columbae* can actually be traced back to Columba's own day is, of course, a matter for debate. It is clear, however, that by the time Adomnán was writing in the late 7th century, the people of Argyll in general were ethnically and linguistically Gaelic.

The likelihood that this was true of Islay in particular is illustrated by an episode in Book II, Chapter 23 where we learn of the demise of a 'man called Feredach who lived in Islay' (Sharpe 1995:172-3). Although the largest part of this account is irrelevant to the present investigation, it is interesting to note that Feredach is both rich and presumably – in contrast to his unfortunate Pictish guest, Taran – of Dalriadan, *ie.* Gaelic extraction. As Feredach also happens to be an acquaintance of Columba, the king-maker and founder of the monastery on Iona (*cf.* Sharpe 1995:1-34), it can be assumed that he too must be of some social standing. Thus we can conclude that by the time Adomnán was writing, and almost

[29] While it should be noted that there is now a Loch Ederline some 10km to the NNE of Dunadd, the place-name Calathros is unattested except in relation to Islay (see below).

certainly earlier, Islay possessed a hierarchical social structure headed by Gaelic speaking potentates with important political connections in the outside world.

Another important conclusion that can be drawn from both Adomnán's work and the annals is that Dalriadan society was Christian. Leaving aside issues of moral outlook, this points to the existence of a sophisticated model of social control.[30] Unlike the modern papal orthodoxy, the 'Irish' or 'Celtic' Christianity in question had no single, centralised hierarchy. Instead, there were numerous monastic *familia* vying for authority at any given time (*cf.* Etchingham 1999). We know of the operation of at least two of these in the Hebrides prior to the arrival of the Norse. One, which attributed its foundation to Máel Rhubha, had its headquarters at Appelcross on the mainland opposite Skye (Anderson 1973:8). It was the *familia* of Columba, however, with its *caput* on Iona, which appears to have had the greatest impact on the inner isles (Chapters 7 and 8).

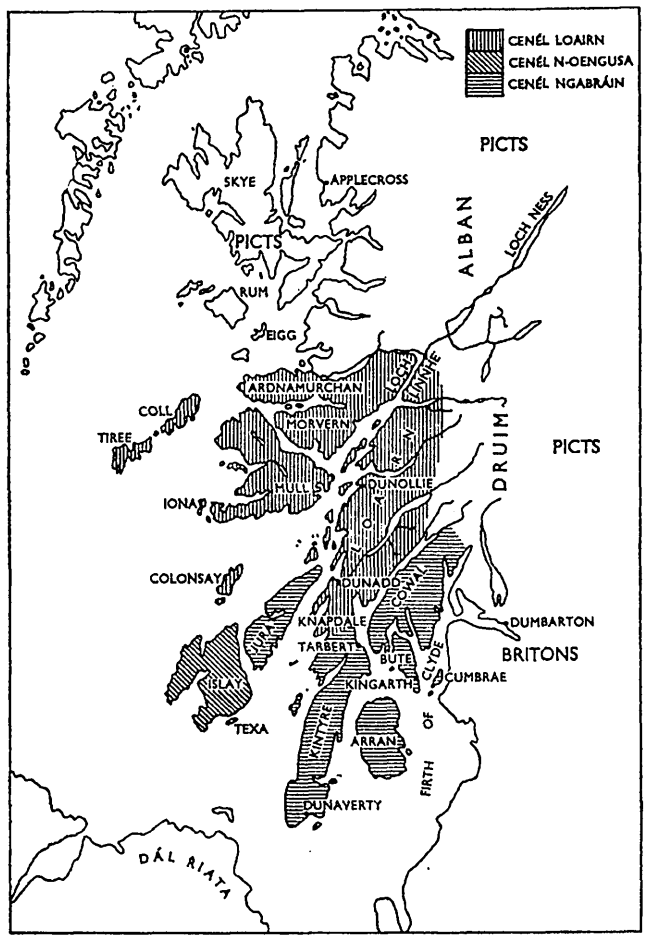

Figure 3: Lands of the principal Dalriadan cenéla in Scotland (Bannerman 1974:116)

Royal patronage of Columba and his *familia* by the *Cenél nGabráin* of Dalriada has resulted in a rather one-sided overview of their relative significance in the Early Christian Hebrides (Lane & Campbell 2000:37). It should be noted, however, that Iona also came to control a wide network of monasteries in Ireland, Scotland and Northumbria, with links to even further flung parts of mainland Europe and the Mediterranean. Given the likely role of its abbots in the introduction of new forms of organisation and authority to Argyll – and the profound impact this would have had on regional prosperity – it is difficult to imagine that the rulers of nearby Islay were not amongst the earliest beneficiaries of this process. The intricacy of the early Christian crosses in the church-yards of Kilnave and Kildalton, for example – which may date to the later pre-Norse period (see Appendix I) – suggests that the material gains of this patronage were reciprocal.

[30] For a concise discussion of the role of Christianity in the centralisation of power in the early medieval North, see Urbanczyk (1998:129-33).

2.3 Dalriadan society

While the annals and Adomnán's *Life of Columba* preserve little specific detail on settlement and society in early historic Islay, they do establish strong links between Argyll and Ireland – thereby allowing use to be made of the more plentiful Irish material for these purposes.

Although the written sources for early historic Irish society range from the Ogham inscriptions of the 5th century to the *dindsenchas* ('place-lore') of the Middle Irish period, the most extensive commentary is provided by the law codes and legal glosses of the 7th and 8th centuries. Perhaps the most comprehensive of these are the texts on status known as *Crith Gablach* (CG) and *Uraicecht Becc* (UB) (Kelly 1997:6-15).

The fundamental unit of the society illustrated by these texts is the *derbfine* family group – the 'certain kin' of agnatic descendants of a common great-grandfather who shared equal rights in matters of inheritance (Binchy 1970:25; Jaski 2000:89-91). These extended family units were grouped together geographically into *túatha* or 'kingdoms' and ruled over by a *rí* or 'king'. Unlike the more familiar feudal kingdoms of later medieval Europe, however, most early Irish kingdoms were relatively small affairs (Jaski 2000:37-9).[31]

According to CG and UB, relationships within and between individual family groups and *túatha* were strictly hierarchical. Broadly speaking, the population of the *túath* could be divided into two main categories: the free and unfree. Persons *sui juris* who had *enech* or 'honour' and thus a *díre* or 'honour price' could be divided into two main sub-groups. The first of these were the *nemed*, the 'holy or privileged' classes, comprising: the *áes dána* or 'scholars', the *grád flatha* or 'nobles' and the *rí túathe* or 'king' – the greatest of the nobles. The second sub-grouping comprised the *grád Fhéné* or 'commoners'. Although the *grád Fhéné* consisted primarily of free farmers it also included such semi-free individuals as women, the adult sons of free men living on their father's land and other, formerly free men who had been paid their honour price by their masters and not therefore considered full legal persons. At the bottom of the social ladder came the unfree – consisting most notably of the *mug* and *cumal* or male and female slave – who were not considered persons at law and therefore had no legal rights. As neither the unfree nor the semi-free are particularly well represented in the sources, however, it is difficult to say what their role and importance in society actually was (*cf.* Byrne 2001; Jaski 2000:39-40).

2.3.1 The importance of land

In the case of the *grád Fhéné* social rank was dependent on the amount of property owned. CG, for example, lists the prerequisite amount of land for each grade of free commoner in terms of *cumal*. While this word originally meant 'female slave' it was also used to describe a unit of value equivalent to three milch cows (Kelly 1997:591-2) and a unit of land measuring 144 by 72 feet (Kelly 1997:574-5).

[31] Although Byrne (2001:7) had previously estimated the number of kingdoms in Early Medieval Ireland to be in excess of 150, such a figure rests on assumptions of average size which are now considered misleading (*cf.* Jaski 2000:38-9).

According to CG, the lowest grade of freeman, the *ócaire* ('young freeman'), was expected to own land worth at least seven *cumals* (Kelly 1997:421). However, only those holding the rank of *mruigfer* ('landman') – *i.e.* with at least 21 *cumals* of land and their own plough-team (Kelly 1997:421, 447) – possessed sufficient land and equipment to farm independently. So close was the link between land ownership and rank, that according to UB a freeman who sold or lost his lands also lost his free status (Kelly 1997:423-4).

Judging from the range of land-types encountered in the law codes (*cf.* Kelly 1997:1-2, 394), we must assume that all available land – and not just that with the best arable potential – was utilised in the Irish (prestige) economy. This in itself is not surprising. According to Iain Crawford (1981:263):

> [It is a] universally demonstrable anthropological principal that all lands and resources are under complete occupation by an indigenous people (if there is a population and excluding rare specialist societies like eremitics) to the degree their technology permits.

In an Irish and probably Hebridean context, however, it seems that even more land was worked than was necessary for subsistence. Despite repeated outbreaks of plague in the post-Roman period, there is evidence of settlement expansion and agricultural intensification in Ireland. Charles-Edwards (1996:42) sees the causal factor in this process as the increasingly hierarchical nature of Irish society, with men clearing land: 'to protect their rank rather than simply to ensure an adequate supply of food'.

It would be reasonable to assume, therefore, that there was no unfettered land of any quality in Islay at the time of the Norse *adventus* and that the only way the incoming Norsemen might acquire it was by sale, gift or conquest from the local population. While major land-holders may have been willing to alienate parcels of land for political reasons, it is unlikely that their less well-endowed counterparts would have been quite so keen to suffer the loss of status that a reduction in land-holding entailed.[32] On the contrary, most land was probably jealously guarded. An indication of the potential force which could be called upon by the rulers of Dalriada to protect their heritable concerns can be found in the multi-period document known as the *Senchus fer n'Alban.*

2.3.2 The *Senchus fer nAlban*

The *Senchus* is a mixture of genealogy and census material which looks back to the legendary foundation of Dalriada by Fergus Mór mac Erc towards the end of the 5th century AD. It tells of how the three principal *cenéla* of the kingdom – the *Cenél nGabráin*, the *Cenél Loairnd* and the *Cenél nOengusa* – were established by descendents of Erc and how these were dominated from an early stage by the dynasty of Gabrain. This in itself is far from remarkable. Numerous other royal genealogies survive from the medieval *Gàidhealtachd* which tell us much the same thing (*cf.* Dumville 2000, 2002). What sets this particular document apart is the way in which it goes on to detail the land-holdings of the different *cenéla* along with their military obligations to the Dalriadan king.

[32] According to CG, even the fragmentation of a father's estate on inheritance could result in loss of status among his sons (Jaski 2000:112).

According to the *Senchus*, the lands of Islay were divided by the great-grandsons of Oengus Mór, a brother of Fergus mac Erc and a branch of the *Cenél Conchride* descended from the son or grandsons of Fergus Bec mac Erc. This is followed by what appears to be a detailed breakdown of administrative districts and military strength in which we are told:

32. Cét treb i nÍle: O<i>deich .xx. tech; Freg .cxxx. tech; C<a>ladrois .ix. tech; Rois Deorand .xxx. tech; Aird Hes .xxx. tech; Loch Rois .xxx. tech; Átha Cassil .xxx. <...> in sin.
33. †<...> Ceníuil Oengusa .xxx. tech Caillnac <...>†
34. Acht it beca inna feranna tige Ceníuil Oengusa, oen fer<ann> tríchot.
35. Fec<h>t áirmi (slógad) Ceníuil Oengus, .i. cóic cét f<h>er.
36. Fecht áirmi Ceníuil Gabráin, .i. .ccc. f<h>er.
37. Mad fec<h>t immorra for imram, <dá> s<h>echts<h>es<s> uaidib i fec<h>t.
38. It é téora trena Dáil Riatai .i. Cenél nGabráin, Cenél nOengusa, Cenél Lo<a>irnd Móir.
39-42. [Introduction to the Cenél Loairnd Móir].[33]
43. Fecht áirmi Ceníuil Loairn secht cét f<h>er, acht is dinaib Airgiallaib in sec<h>tmad cét.
44. Mad fecht immorra for imram, <dá> s<h>ec<h>ts<h>ess ó cach f<h>ichit taigi díb.

(Dumville 2002:202)

32-3. [List of settlement districts].
34. But small are the *fearanna* ['lands', see Chapter 8] of the houses of the Cenél nOengusa .i. thirty-one *fearanna*.
35. The expeditionary strength of the hostings of the Cenél nOengusa .i. five hundred men.
36. The expeditionary strength of the Cenél nGabráin .i. three hundred men.
37. If it be an expeditionary force, moreover, for sea-voyaging, two seven-benchers [this is a matter for debate, see below] from them in an expedition [...]
38. They are the three thirds of the Dál Riata .i. Cenél nGabráin, Cenél nOengusa, Cenél Loairnd Móir
43. The expeditionary strength of the Cenél Loairnd, seven hundred men, but the seventh hundred is from the Airgialla.
44. If it be an expeditionary force, morever, for sea-voyaging, two seven benchers from every twenty houses of them. (Bannerman 1974:48-9)

After presenting a list of land-holdings for the *Cenél Loairnd*, but interestingly, not the *Cenél nGabráin*, the *Senchus* ends by telling us that:

49. Tri chaícait f<h>er, ind longas, do-lotar la macu Erc as; is hé in tres coíca Corpri cona muintir.
50. Cenél nGabráin in so: trí .xx. taige ar c<h>óic cétaib; Cend Tire ocus Crich Comgaill cona insib; <dá> s<h>ec<h>ts<h>ess cach .xx. taiga <i> fec<h>t mara.
51. Cenél nOengusa, .xxx. taige ar .cccc. leo; dá s<h>echts<h>ess cach (tech,) .xx. taiga <i> fec<h>t mara.
52. Cenél loairnd xx. tech ar cccc.[aib] leo; dá s<h>ec<h>ts<h>ess cach .xx. tech <i> fec<h>t mara.
53. Is amluid fo théora trenai Dá<i>l Riaddai. (Dumville 2002:202-3)

49. A hundred and fifty men, the ship expedition, went forth with the sons of Erc, the third fifty was Corpri with his people.
50. This is the Cenél nGabráin, five hundred and sixty houses, Kintyre and Crích Chomgaill with its islands, two seven-benchers every twenty houses in a sea expedition.
51. Cenél nOengusa has four hundred and twenty houses, two seven-benchers every twenty houses in a sea expedition.
52. Cenél Loairnd has four hundred and twenty houses, two seven-benchers every twenty houses in a sea expedition.
53. It is thus throughout the three thirds of Dál Riadda. (Bannerman 1976:49)

Ascertaining the provenance of this material is far from straightforward. Although none of the extant MSS can be shown to predate the 14th century (Bannerman 1974:28-32), it is thought that the earliest of these is actually several steps removed from the original. While Bannerman (1974:38-9) suggests, on the

[33] The punctuation and sentence structure in this version were added by Dumville (2002:200) for ease of access. Although Bannerman's translation has been dissected here to match Dumville's sentence structure, his punctuation remains unchanged.

basis of comparative grammatical analysis, that the extant MSS can be traced back to a single 10th century intermediate, Anderson (1973:160) argues for a point of convergence somewhere in the eighth. Both Bannerman and Anderson seem to be in agreement that these intermediate editions derive ultimately from a 7th century original. The date of AD 660 which Bannerman gives as a near *terminus post quem* for its composition is based on the last independently datable event in the *Senchus*, the obit of Conall Crandomna. It should be noted, however, as Bannerman (1974:118-32) himself points out, that there are a number of clear interpolations and emendations in the text.

While the subject matter of these accretions has little direct bearing on the study of settlement and society in pre-Norse Islay, the mere fact they exist places doubts on the reliability of more relevant aspects of this tractate. It has been suggested, for example, that the uneasy conflation of genealogical and census material is the result of the later emendation of an original genealogy based work (*cf.* Dumville 2002:207). But if as seems likely the basic skeleton of the census can be ascribed to the pre-Norse period, we can nevertheless see this as evidence that early medieval Dalriadan society was not only hierarchical but organised on a war-footing. As with any military machine, however, both the mobilisation and effectiveness of the Dalriadan levy may have been circumscribed by the political concerns of its commander in chief, in this case most probably the Dalriadan king.

2.3.3 Early Irish kingship

In theory at least, every freeman in early medieval Ireland was either a *flaith* ('lord') or a *céle* ('client') of a lord and thus, as Byrne (2001:28) puts it, 'involved in a nexus of mutual responsibilities extending beyond the confines of his *fine* ['extended family']'. The practicalities of this clientship, which might be base (*aicillne*) or free (*sóerrath*), were complex (*cf.* Gerriets 1983, 1987; Jaski 2000:105-112) – with the concomitant rendering of goods and services forming the basis of a primitive embedded economy (*cf.* Gerriets 1983). At the apex of the local hierarchy was the *rí túathe* or 'king'.

Although early assessments of Irish kingship stressed the sacral aspects of the institution, it is now thought unlikely that the average king would have differed significantly in terms of either *modus operandi* or resources from the other senior nobles in the *túath* (*cf.* Jaski 2000:25-7). While the office did entail a large number of *gessa* and *buada* ('taboos' and 'prerogatives': *cf.* Binchy 1970:15), these were mostly symbolic (Jaski 2000:82-4). The king did not necessarily have more land, excepting that which followed his office and would not necessarily have had more disposable wealth were it not for the operation of a system of hospitality that helped to limit his financial outlay. Moreover, the king was not immediately responsible for the personal integrity of every individual in his *túath*; only those who happened to be his clients – in exactly the same way that other nobles were responsible for theirs. Where early Irish kingship can be considered unusual is in the complexity of the rules governing succession (Jaski 2000:27-31, 191-276). Unlike the more familiar feudal norm, these did not recognise primogeniture – where office passed from father to first-born son. Instead, there might be a pool of suitable candidates identified, among other things, on the basis of ability and seniority in relationship to the previous king.

Perhaps the most important function of the king in early Irish society was as the representative of his people in relationships with other *túatha*. And as far as the present discussion is concerned, the most important aspect of this role was his right to raise an army (OIr *slógad* = 'hosting') to repel invaders or to counter internal threats. Indeed, it was an obligation of the king's clients to provide him with armed men for the hosting (Binchy 1970:16, 21). It should also be noted here that Byrne's 'nexus of mutual responsibilities' extended beyond the confines of the *túath*. In addition to the king of a single *túath*, the law tracts describe two official grades of over-king: the *ruiri* or 'superior king' – who ruled at least two other *túatha* in addition to his own – and the *rí ruireg* or 'king of superior kings' (Binchy 1970:31-3; Jaski 2000:99-102).[34] It follows, therefore, that the more important the king and the greater the number of *túatha* under his control, the greater his potential military strength.

2.3.4 Problems applying the Irish model to Dalriada

While the law tracts and commentaries provide a broadly reliable guide to early medieval Irish society, there are reasons to believe this is somewhat idealised. There are, for example, suspiciously clear parallels between the seven subdivisions of the nobility, commoners and the unfree listed in CG and the seven orders of the early Church. It is also clear from other sources that this overly schematised worldview masks a certain amount of variation, indeed deviation in local practise. Recent scrutiny of the documentary evidence has suggested that the prospect of increased financial outlay in the form of grants to clients might discourage exceptionally wealthy individuals from choosing to join the nobility or from taking part in the system at all (Gerriets 1983:57-60). As a result, it must be wondered how completely the rigid social structure of the law-tracts reflects the political realities of Dalriadan society.

While the documentary record for Ireland abounds with references to kings of the lower order,[35] neither Adomnán's *Vita Columbae* nor the Irish annals make any mention of sub-kings in Dalriada (Sharpe 2000:52). Although Anderson (1980:158-65) surmises that by 700 there were no less than seven *túatha* in Dalriada encompassed within four major *cenéla*, there is nothing in the documentary sources, not even in the *Senchus fer nAlban*, to indicate that any of these kindreds other than the *Cenél nGabrain* were ever considered royal (Sharpe 2000:52). Neither does the data in the *Senchus* particularly reflect the structures of the *Crith Gablach*, although as Sharpe (2000:52) points out, resemblance has been expected and assumed (*cf.* Bannerman 1974:133-4; Anderson 1980:131-4). Unlike Ireland, where the fragmented situation of the law tracts is reflected in the historical record, it appears that Dalriada had only one 'king' (Sharpe 2000:52). The idea of centralised power is supported by Adomnán's observation in *Vita Columbae* I:28 that Dalriada had a *caput regiones*, a 'capital' (Sharpe 1995:132, 291), most probably Dunadd (Lane & Campbell 2000; Sharpe 2000; Campbell 2001) or possibly Dunollie (Alcock 1988). Scrutiny of the historical sources suggests, moreover, that the Gabrain dynasty which ruled the area did so

[34] Although the further grade of *ard-rí* or 'high-king' is attested in a number of literary sources, it does not appear to have been legally established (Binchy 1970:32-3; Jaski 2000:214-18).

[35] Attention can be drawn here to AT 562.2, which records the death of seven kings of the Cruithne in the battle of Móin Daire Lothair.

without particular regard for the traditional Irish laws governing succession. As Sharpe (2000:60) points out:

> In spite of problems in the mid and late eleventh century the one principle line continues until primogeniture became established in the twelfth century and on indeed until the death of Alexander III in 1286 [...] This line maintained a remarkable hold on the kingship and even succeeded in confining the regnal succession within a significantly narrower range of kinship than was normal in Ireland.

If accepted, Sharpe's assessment has significant implications for the operation of royal authority in early medieval Dalriada. Most importantly, the office of king would be less reliant on popular acclaim than it was in Ireland, where the privileged position of the *rí* was dependent on the continued goodwill of clients. As a result, the rulers of Dalriada would be able to act with less regard to the lives and livelihood of their peoples when resolving critical issues. Sharpe (2000:61) has further suggested that: '[t]he strength of Dalriada had been dynastic centralization or concentration over a long period'; that it appears to have been: 'strikingly more stable than the usual experience of Irish kingships'; and that: 'parallels between suppositions based on *Senchus fer nAlban* and *Críth Gablach* have tended to disguise that'. It might also be argued, however, that as far as the ordinary inhabitants of Dalriada were concerned, this was actually its major weakness. With the prime-movers in Dalriadan power-politics being drawn ever deeper into Pictish affairs in the late 8th century (Chapter 3), it was surely only a matter of time before they cut their less prestigious homeland loose, leaving it leaderless, unable to raise the levies and unable to defend itself effectively in the face the Norse incursions.

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2.4 The material evidence

Having established a basic ethno-linguistic profile for Dalriadan Islay, it would also be desirable to establish how large its population is likely to have been and how this might have been distributed in the landscape. If faced with a sufficiently large and hostile population it seems unlikely that anything less than complete subjugation would have allowed ethnic Norse incomers to settle as such in relative safety.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the documentary record is of limited use in the respect. Although it is tempting to extrapolate from the military data in the *Senchus*, we cannot be certain of the geographical areas covered by the different levies, let alone of whether the figures are accurate or even linked to the pre-Norse period. The next potentially useful demographic is found in the anonymous *Description of the Isles of Scotland* (Skene 1880:428-40) dated by Skene (1880:440 FN1) on the basis of internal references to the period between 1577 and 1595. We are told here that:

> [I]lk merk land man sustein daylie and yeirlie ane gentleman in meit and claith, quhilk dois na labour, but is haldin as an of their maisters household men, and man be sustenit and furneisit in all necessaries be the tennant, and he man be reddie to his maisters servis and advis. (*ibid*:438)

Considering that Islay is set at '18 score merkland' elsewhere in the *Description* (*ibid*:437), this would allow for a standing army of 360 men. It should be stressed, however, that the number of soldiers and

military equipment raised from a given population at a given time might vary according to a number of factors over and above the size of population, including the overall burden of tax, the percentage of tax extracted in other services and indeed the circumstances of the call up. To complicate matters yet further, the author goes on to point out that '[l]le [...] will raise 800 men' (*ibid*:437), suggesting that there was a difference between the statutory minimum number of warriors and the actual number of heads that could be fielded in a military action. As neither figure is matched by the 500 men of the *Senchus* it is possibly best to discard all three as points of departure for population estimates.

Similar caution must be taken with the various formulae devised to estimate the maximum carrying capacity of given types of environment under given types of subsistence strategy. As Fojut (1982:52-3) points out, these synthetic models tend to give grossly exaggerated figures for larger areas – such as Islay. Perhaps a better guide to the size of the island's Dalriadan population, therefore, is the early census data.

In 1755, during the opening stages of Islay's Agrarian revolution, the population stood at around 5,500 (Darling 1955:83). It is possible that the pre-Norse figure was not much lower. Given that the Islay economy of the 1750s was only just beginning to recover from the devastation of the Civil War, however (see Chapter 7), it is not inconceivable, although perhaps less likely, that the pre-Norse figure was actually slightly higher.

Locating this population in the landscape is a matter for even greater speculation. In the absence of early documentary sources and relevant archaeological material, the physical distribution of Islay's Dalriadan inhabitants remains poorly understood. What little evidence is currently available, comes from the largely superficial analysis of the island's presumed Iron Age fortifications.

2.4.1 Iron Age fortifications

In terms of its conspicuous dry-stone defensive structures, Islay belongs to the so-called Atlantic Province of Piggott's (1966:1-25) scheme for the Scottish Iron Age: an architectural continuum stretching from Ireland in the South to Shetland in the North (*cf.* Henderson 2000:117-54). Typical of these monuments are the enclosures known as forts, duns and brochs (*cf.* RCAHMS 1984:20-6; Hedges 1990; Nieke 1990:131-42; Harding 1997:118-40).

As with cognates elsewhere in Argyll, the forts and duns of Islay share a number of architectural features, characteristically in their walls – which tend to display a combination of solid rubble cores, revetments, timber lacing and vitrification, intra-mural staircases and cells and rebates for wooden doors – and external defences, which, where present, most often consist of a single dry-stone wall (RCAHMS1971:16, 18; 1984:24). While this makes precise classification difficult, the choice of terminology confuses matters yet further. The designation 'dun', which is applied to the most common of these monuments, is derived from the G appellative *dùn* (m) meaning 'heap/ hill/ fastness' (*cf.* Dwelly 2001:373) and as such present

as an element in the names of many current 'forts'.

2.4.1.1 Duns

Although duns are normally defined in contrast to forts, as dry-stone enclosures with an internal area of less than 375m^2 (RCAHMS 1971:16), the distinction is fairly arbitrary. While the smallest of Islay's duns, on Borraichill Mòr near Bridgend, has an internal diameter of about 6m (RCAHMS 1984:105-6), the largest, An Dùn at Mullach Bàn (RCAHMS 1984:103) and Lòn Bròach 1 near Lossit in Kilmeny Parish (RCAHMS 1984:117-8) are only distinguishable from forts on account of their disproportionately thick walls and regularity of plan (RCAHMS 1984:24).

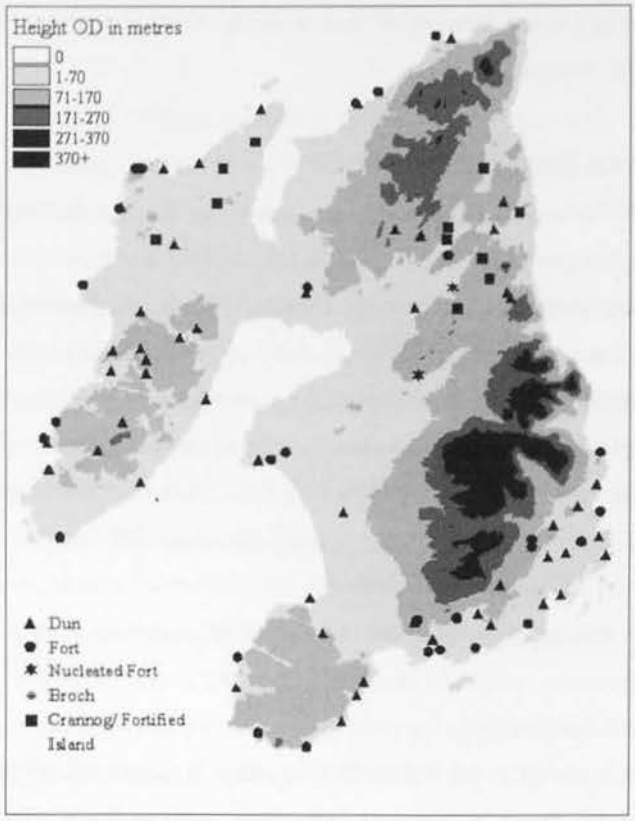

Figure 4:(Potential) Iron Age fortifications (Data from CANMORE)

Of the 57 known duns in Islay (CANMORE), 22 can be found in the parish of Kilchoman, 12 in Kilarrow and Kilmeny and a further 23 in Kildalton and Oa. Despite their apparently defensive nature there are relatively few duns on naturally defensible summits. Those which are tend to be irregular on plan, perhaps highlighting an important distinction. The majority of Islay Duns are, moreover, located relatively close to the sea on small knolls or even on level ground and usually have relatively easy access to surrounding arable or grazing.

2.4.1.2 Forts

While the forts of Piggott's Atlantic Province are more likely to have external defences than its duns, the main distinction made by the RCAHMS (1971:16) in its Inventory for Argyll is an internal area in excess of 375m^2. Although the largest of the Islay forts is the poorly preserved promontory fort of Dùn Bheòlain in NW Kilchoman at just over 2 ha (RCAHMS 1984:86-8), the average area enclosed by defence works appears to be about 0.25 ha (RCAHMS 1984:21).

Of the 35 known forts in Islay (CANMORE), 9 lie in the parish of Kilchoman, 9 in Kilmeny and Kilarrow and 17 in Kildalton and Oa. As elsewhere in Argyll, almost all are to be found on promontories or hilltops on or near the coast at higher average altitudes than duns (*cf.* Harding 1997:120). It is perhaps significant, however, given the coastal nature of these sites, that only two – Barr an t-Seann Duine and Sròn Dubh – are located near sheltered landing-places. In many cases, and especially at sites at higher

altitudes, the amount of 'conveniently habitable' ground is much less than might be expected for duns (RCAHMS 1984:21).

2.4.1.3 Nucleated forts

While typically protected by a single dry-stone wall, several Islay forts including Dùn Bheòlain in NW Kilchoman (RCAHMS 1984:86-8) and Dùn Athad near the Mull of Oa (RCAHMS 1984:264-5) are surrounded by an elaborate system of walls and ditches. These multivallate forts must be distinguished, however, from the nucleated fort – a type characterised by its layout of citadel with multiple annexes, often on a series of terraces below the citadel summit (*cf.* Harding 1997:121-2). This latter type, represented in Islay by Dùn Nosebridge in the Laggan valley (RCAHMS 1984:94-5) and Dùn Guaire in the Sorn valley (RCAHMS 1984:91-2), has been associated in mainland Argyll with 'royal' centres and re-distributive trade networks (*cf.* Harding 1997:121-2; Alcock 1988:22-46; Lane & Campbell 2000). It may be significant in this respect that unlike almost every other Islay fort, Dùn Nosebridge and Dùn Guaire are located in inland areas directly adjacent to large tracts of high quality arable land.

2.4.1.4 Brochs

In addition to its duns and forts, Islay's *corpus* of dry-stone Iron Age enclosures includes one known broch: the southernmost of the seven monuments of this type thus far recognised in Argyll (RCAHMS 1984:23). Located on the summit of Dún Bhoraraic in the SW of the former Kilmeny Parish (RCAHMS 1984:101-2), Islay's solitary broch displays most of the structural elements which distinguish this type of structure from other small dry-stone enclosures of the Iron Age Atlantic Province: a circular plan, thick galleried walls with a ledge-like scarcement in its inner face, a guard cell, a possible intramural cell and a rebated entrance passage (RCAHMS 1984:23; Hedges 1990).[36] While the diameter of Dún Bhoraraic's central court at 13.7 m is the largest recorded, the proportion of total wall-base to overall diameter (40.5%) is not unusually low. Perhaps significantly, Dún Bhoraraic is located in the fertile SE part of the former Kilmeny parish, overlooking the central section of the Sound of Islay, currently one of the most important shipping lanes in the Hebrides.

2.4.1.5 Crannogs

Another type of field monument which should be considered in this context is the artificial islet or 'crannog' (*cf.* Barber & Crone 1993:520). As these islands are normally seen as stances for domestic buildings (Nieke 1990:138) they too can be counted amongst the island's defensive structures. A total of 9 crannogs have been identified in Islay to date: 3 in the parish of Kilchoman, 4 in Kilarrow and Kilmeny and 2 in Kildlaton and Oa. Given the island's large number of water bodies (*cf.* Ogilvie 2003:13), however, it is possible that more have been lost or are awaiting discovery. It is doubtless significant that all known examples are either adjacent to or within a kilometre or two of relatively high quality arable land.

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[36] The precise definition of these structures has been the source of no little debate. See, for example: Harding 1984:206-220; Parker Pearson *et al.* 1996:58-9; Gilmour 2000:157-9.

2.4.2 Dating

While there are strong typological grounds for tracing all of these structures to the Atlantic Iron Age, it must be remembered that this chronological label covers a period of well over 1000 years: ranging from the early 1st millennium BC, to the mid 1st millennium AD and arguably, in some cases, to the arrival of the Norse and beyond (*cf.* Hedges 1990:17-18; Harding 2000a:301; Gilmour 2000:155). The one reliably dated example in Islay is the unnamed dun discovered between the castle and the crannog on *Eilean na Comhairle* in Loch Finlaggan.[37] As radiocarbon dates from the crannog suggest a final, intense phase of building activity in the 6th century AD and the typology of the castle suggests construction in the 12th, it stands to reason that the dun was built and occupied at some point in between (*cf.* Caldwell 2001:172-3). Unfortunately, the lack of any further chronologically diagnostic material means that the more precise dating of Islay's Iron Age fortifications must rely on evidence from cognate sites elsewhere.

It can be assumed on the basis of the dozen or so excavated duns in Argyll that occupation of duns as a class is likely to have continued into the early historical period (Alcock & Alcock 1987:131; Harding 1997:122). Although material recovered from duns on Coll and Tiree has been used to suggest a wave of construction and occupation in the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD (Nieke 1983:302), the bulk of the chronologically diagnostic material from these sites consists of exotic artefacts, such as Roman pottery and metalwork (Nieke 1990:133). It is possible, therefore, that this material first arrived on these sites at a much later date. Similarly, while it has been argued on the basis of excavations at Balloch Hill, Eilean an Duin and Duntroon that forts in general were declining in importance by the final century BC (Nieke 1983:301, 1990:132), the value of these conclusions, based on such a limited sample, are questionable. When it comes to the nucleated fort for example, there is both documentary and material evidence to suggest that occupation continued well into the Dalriadan period. Indeed, excavation at the type-site in Argyll, Dunadd, has produced no evidence of earlier settlement (Lane & Campbell 2000, Campbell 2001).

Like nucleated forts, many broch sites, if not the structures themselves, are known to have been occupied into the immediately pre-Norse period in Shetland, Orkney and the Western Isles (*cf.* Gourlay 1995:111; Hedges 1987). Likewise, while early examples of Scottish crannogs have been dated to the first millennium BC (*cf.* Harding 2000b; Henderson 1998), there is also documentary evidence for their continued use and construction *per novo* well into the historical period. Considering the known rise in the popularity of the crannog as a settlement type in Ireland from the 7th century onwards (Nieke 1983:305), it can be assumed that at least some of the Islay cognates were also occupied in this period.

It should also be noted, however, that certain structures or defensive locations, which might otherwise have been dated to the Dalriadan era, may not in fact have been built or occupied until much later.

[37] See notes on Finlaggan in Kilmeny, in Appendix I.

Although Dùn Athad, for example, at the SW extremity of the Oa occupies the kind of promontory site typical of many Iron Age forts, the only visible remains appear to date to the 16th or 17th century (RCAHMS 1984:264-5). It has been suggested by David Caldwell (2001:128-9) that Dùn Midier in the Rhinns[38] may have been home to MacKay of the Rhinns in the early 17th century. Similar observations have been made of the fortifications on Islay's natural islands. Notwithstanding the famous island castles on Loch Finlaggan and Loch Gorm,[39] which are known to have been in use in the late medieval and Early Modern periods, there are at least 10 other islands in Islay's freshwater lochs that incorporate the remains of standing structures. In the case of Eilean Mhic Iain on Loch Lossit, occupation appears to have continued as late as the 17th or possibly even 18th century (RCAHMS 1984:38). As it is also possible that individual duns, forts or crannogs had fallen into disuse in the early centuries AD, it cannot be assumed that all of Islay's Iron Age defensive structures were occupied in the immediately pre-Norse period. The total numbers and distribution are such, however, that most localities are likely to have had at least one contemporary example.

2.4.3 Function

It is clear from the scale of these monuments that most if not all were prestige structures, whose construction would not have been possible without considerable investment of resources and labour. However, the poor state of preservation and almost total lack of excavation at these sites makes more precise evaluation difficult. While all of them must be considered defensive in nature, this does not necessarily preclude their use for a variety of other symbolic and practical purposes (*cf.* Alcock 1988:27). It seems likely, for example, that many were inhabited on a permanent basis. It is no doubt significant in this respect that none of these structures in Islay, and very few elsewhere in Argyll, have been found above the 600 feet (*c.* 185m) contour, above which high winds would have made life extremely difficult (Harding 1997:118-19); and that the smaller and more regular structures may have functioned more efficiently with roofs (*cf.* Nieke 1990:136-8). While Nieke (1990:140) may be correct in assuming that duns at least were high status homesteads, with differences in size reflecting differences in status, it is also possible that these differences reflect different periods of construction (*cf.* Harding 1997:118). To suggest that the distinction between duns and forts, however, was that between single families and communities is perhaps fanciful (*cf.* RCAHMS 1971:16).

The discovery of farm implements in duns in other parts of Argyll suggests that the inhabitants were involved in agricultural activity (Nieke 1983:305). As the Islay duns cover most habitable parts of the island at fairly regular intervals, it is not unreasonable to suggest that they formed the focal points for local landscape exploitation (*cf.* Nieke 1990:139). As prestige structures, however, they are unlikely to have been the only type of habitation in use at any given time. It has been argued by Nieke (1983,1984,1990) that the 90 or so presumed Iron Age fortifications on Islay would have formed only a part of the 350 *tech*, or 'houses', associated with the *Cenél nOengusa* in the survey section of the *Senchus*

[38] See notes on Grimsay in Kilchoman, in Appendix I.
[39] See notes on Sunderland in Kilchoman and Finlaggan in Kilmeny respectively, in Appendix I.

and that future excavation might reveal traces of the remaining, less durable or less conspicuous settlement sites. The basic tenet of this argument is sound and we should probably expect the majority of Islay's Iron Age population to be scattered between these nodal structures with higher densities almost certainly grouping around areas of more fertile, self-draining and easily tilled soils (Appendix II). It is perhaps simplistic, however, to assume a straightforward correlation between the enumeration of 'houses' in the *Senchus* and the number of structures on the ground. The OI noun *tech* (m) could be used on various semantic levels besides the ordinary sense of 'dwelling-house'. In the highly schematised worldview of CG, for example, the *tech* was the qualifying 'extent' of property required by a given grade of free-man. If the *tech* of the *Senchus* can be equated with a fixed 'class' of freeman (*cf.* Bannerman 1974:136-9), it is likely that the land-holdings of certain more powerful individuals extended to several standard *tech* units. There need not, however, have been a prestige dwelling in every theoretical sub-division of these larger estates. Conversely, it is possible that even the standard *tech* unit included the dwellings of several of its lord's base-clients, farm-workers *etc.* To complicate matters yet further, we cannot even be certain that the total number of *tech* recorded for the *Cenél nOengusa* were all in Islay, or if all of the landholdings in Islay are listed (Chapter 8).

CHAPTER 3: THE NORSE PERIOD

3.1 Introduction

By the time Adomnán wrote his *Life of Columba* in the late 7th century, the native population of Islay can be considered ethnically and linguistically 'Gaelic'. That this Gaelic society was hierarchical and in occupation of the entire island is suggested by the documentary and material evidence alike. Following a brief meteorological report in the mid 8th century (AU 740.3), however, the island and its inhabitants virtually disappear from the historical record. When they begin to emerge again in the second half of the 12th century, it is at the epicentre of an apparantly Gaelic thalassocracy known first as the Kingdom and later as the Lordship of the Isles (see below). And therein lies the enigma. While it is somewhere in these missing four centuries that we will find Islay's Norse period, there is precious little in the historical record to suggest that medieval Norsemen even visited the island.

3.2 The documentary evidence

The largely 13th century *Chronicon Regum Manniae et Insularum*[40] tells us that Manx king Godred *Crovan* (G 'White Hand') Haraldson – who had fought alongside Harald *harðráði* (ON 'Hard Ruler') Sigurðsson at the Battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066 – died *in insula quae vocatur Yle* around 1095 (CRM§23). In addition to this, the Norse *skáld* Björn *krepphendi* (ON 'the Cripple-Handed'), cited by Snorri Sturluson in the *Magnúss saga berfœtts* (ON 'Bareleg') section of his *Heimskringla*, lists it as one of the targets on Magnús Ólafsson's infamous Hebridean expedition of 1098 (Aðalbjarnarson 1954:219-23; See Figure 5 below). Otherwise there are no other direct references to any kind of intrinsically Norse activity on Islay before the state-sponsored manoeuvrings of Hákon IV Hákonarson in the mid 13th century (ESSHII:471-8 at 475, 607-42 at 634-5; Duncan & Brown 1956-7), by which point the island had been a central part of the MacSorley kingdom for almost a hundred years.

While these references suggest that Islay registered quite highly on the Norse prestige radar towards the end of the Viking Age, they say nothing explicit about earlier contact with the Norse world and less about the ethnicity or language of the local population or its leaders. As a result, it is routinely assumed that Norse settlement was limited, that the ensuing cultural impact was minimal and that the missing years in Islay's historical record were characterised by unbroken, if not entirely untroubled, Gaelic hegemony (*eg.* Nieke 1983:313; Storrie 1997:32; MacDonald 1997:28; Marsden 2000:12-13). To regard this somewhat limited *corpus* as a comprehensive record of Norse activity in Islay, however, is perhaps less than wise. Simply because a large part of the Hebrides, including Islay, happened to escape the attention of medieval historiographers during the Viking Age does not mean it escaped the attentions of the incoming Norse.

[40] Broderick & Stowell 1973, hereafter CRM.

178. *Lék of Ljóðhús fíkjum* *limsorg náar himni.* *Vítt vas verð á flótta* *fús. Gaus eldr ór húsum.* *Örr skjöldungr fór eldi* *Ívist. Búender misstu,* *róggeilsa vann ræsir* *rauðan, lífs og auðar.*	In Lewis Isle with fearful blaze The house-destroying fire plays; To hills and rocks the people fly Fearing all shelter but the sky. In Uist the king deep crimson made the lightning of his glancing blade The peasant lost his land and life Who dared to bide the Norseman's strife
179. *Hungrþverrir lét herjat* *hríðar gagls á Skíði.* *Tönn rauð Tyrvist innan* *teitr vargr í ben marga.* *Grætti Grenlands dróttin,* *gekk hótt Skota støkkvir,* *þjóð rann mýlsk til mæði,* *meyjar suðr í eyjum.*	The hungry battle-birds were filled In Skye with blood of foeman killed, And wolves on Tiree's lonely shore Dyed red their hairy jaws in gore. The men of Mull were tired of flight; The Scottish foemen would not fight And many an island-girl's wail Was heard as through the Isles we sail
180. *Vítt bar snjallr á sléttа* *Sandey konungr randir.* *Rauk um Íl, þás jóku* *allvalds menn á brennur.* *Sanntíri laut sunnar* *segja kind und eggjar.* *Sigrgæðir réð síðan* *snjallr Manverja falli.*	On Sanda's plain our shields they spy; From Islay smoke rose heaven-high, Whirling up from the flashing blaze The king' men o'er the island raise South of Kintyre the people fled Scared by our swords in blood dyed red, And our brave champion onwards goes To meet in Man the Norseman's foes
(Aðalbjarnarson 1954: 219-23)	(OMACL; Smyth 1984:141)

Figure 5: Selection of Björn Krepphendi's verse on Magnús Berfætt's expedition

3.3 The material record

This hiatus in the documentary record is filled to a certain extent by the archaeological evidence. As with the preceding, Dalriadan era, the island's Norse period is clouded by a general lack of excavated material. Exceptionally, however, its soils and sand-dunes have produced the remains of at least 7 relatively high-status pagan Viking burials (Figure 6). While this tally might seem disproportionately small compared to the 11 discrete examples found on the much smaller islands of Colonsay and Oronsay, some 10km to the North,[41] it is possible that further Islay burials await discovery or that others have been destroyed or removed unnoticed. Around 1800, for example, captain Burgess of the sloop of war *Savage* removed 'one or two swords [and] a pike-head' from a stabilised sand dune near Ballinaby (NMRS: NR26NW 4.00). It seems unlikely that he would have thought to dig in this area, now suspected to be the site of a Viking Age cemetery, without local precedent.

According to Richards (1999:175), the presence of burials 'accompanied by weaponry and jewellery in Scandinavian forms probably represents a first generation of pagan settlers' (*cf.* Eldjárn 1984:7), presumably such as we might imagine followed the initial Viking raids described in the annals (see below). It is of no little significance, therefore, that most of the Islay examples which can be dated have

[41] See, for example, RCAHMS 1984:147-53; Graham Campbell & Batey 1998:90-91 & 113-18

been traced to the second half of the 10th century. Care must obviously be taken when making associations between material culture and ethno-linguistic identity (*cf.* Clarke 1966; Sims-Williams 1998). Considering, however, that the majority of Islay's pagan Norse burials have been found in areas of high quality arable land, and that around half of them have included typically female assemblages, it would be reasonable to suggest that the island was dominated by a conspicuous and settled Scandophile – if not ethnically Scandinavian – element as long as 200 years after the beginning of the Viking Age.

The same conclusion might also be drawn from the large hoard of Viking Age silver discovered on Machrie farm in 1850. As with the burials, this hoard was recovered from an area of high quality arable land. It is also late (*c.* AD 970) and, when taken in context with Scotland's other Viking Age hoards, seems likely to indicate local participation in the insular Scandinavian prestige economy.[42]

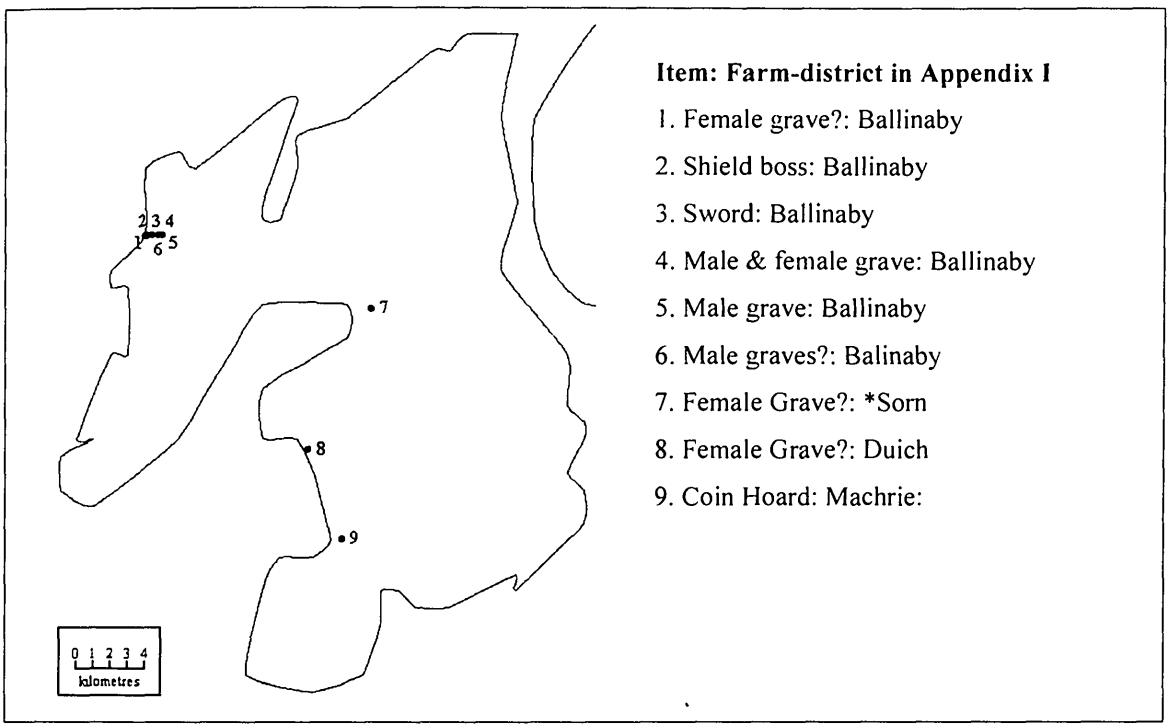

Figure 6: Norse antiquities in Islay

Despite the evidence of the burials and the hoard, it has nevertheless been argued that no part of the Inner Hebrides could have been home to a strong, settled Norse community because the area has failed to produce large numbers of diagnostically Norse house-types.[43] It is important, however, that statistics driven claims such as this are taken in their proper context. While there are indeed no verified reports of any stereotypical Viking longhouses in Islay, this is in direct proportion to the total number of verified

[42] For a coherent summary of the recent debate on the practical function and symbolic meaning of the Viking Age hoard economy, see Bäcklund 2001:46-73.

[43] 'On Becoming and Being: Identity and Political Economy in Viking Age and Medieval Orkney': a lecture given to EMERGE in Edinburgh by J. Barrett on 7 Jun 2004.

Viking Age habitations on the island generally, *ie.* none.[44] Moreover, in a recent analysis of the later medieval structures at the Lordship centre on Eilean Mor on Loch Finlaggan, David Caldwell (2004:79-80) was able to highlight a number of architectural features – such as: (sprung) timber flooring, sub-basements and barrel or boat shaped plans – with clear parallels in Viking Waterford and possible antecedence, therefore, in local Norse culture. Indeed, Norse origins have already been suggested for certain ruins at An Sithean (NMRS:NR26NE 3), Port Buidhe (NMRS:NR5NE 8) and Aird Thorrinnis (NMRS:NR26NW 5) – with a further, barrel-shaped tumulus on Nave Island being indicative perhaps of Barrett's pre-requisite Norse longhouse (NMRS:NR27NE2). Without excavation, it is, of course, impossible to gauge the true provenance of these sites, but even if the resources were available for blanket excavation on Islay or elsewhere, there is no real reason to expect that even a completely Norse society would have produced any great number of archetypal longhouses. The evidence from Norway and other better understood Norse 'colonial' areas such as Ireland and England points to extensive variation in domestic architecture during the Viking Age (*cf.* Myhre 2000:37-8; Jennings & Kruse 2005:251-63).

While the material record, such that it is, seems to point to a relatively long lasting and influential Norse settlement in Islay, it gives no indication of the circumstances under which that settlement took place. In view of the early Irish laws on social-status, however, and the central place of heritable property in that system, this is unlikely to have been a simple case of Norse farmers moving in and claiming unwanted land. To better understand the earlier stages of the settlement process, it is necessary, therefore, to look to the documentary record for the surrounding areas.

3.4 The wider historical context

There are two main sources of documentary evidence for Norse activity in western maritime Scotland during the early Middle Ages: the chronicles and annals of various monastic institutions, chiefly in Ireland, but also in England, France, Man, Pictland and Wales; and the later medieval Icelandic saga material. Unfortunately, neither of these sources can be considered entirely trustworthy.

3.4.1 Annals and chronicles

Although some of the annalistic material has the advantage of being more or less contemporary with the events it describes, it is far from unbiased in terms of focus. While two early references to the 'Devastation of all the Islands of Britain by heathens' (AI 794.7) and 'great incursions both in Ireland and in Alba' (AU 798.2) give vague indications of intense Scandinavian activity in the Hebrides, the vast majority of Hebrides specific reportage is reserved for pagan raids on Celtic Christian monasteries. While AU 795.3 could only with some difficulty be taken as recording the plundering of Máel Rhubha's head-

[44] While a selection of pot-sherds found at An Dun, Rockside (NMRS:NR26SW 3), have been identified by Hodgkinson and Cregeen as being of possible late Viking Age origin, this does not necessarily prove contemporary occupation of the building. Similarly, while the dun on Eilean na Comhairle has been dated to the period between the 6th and 12th centuries (Chapter 2), there is, as yet, no evidence that it was occupied during the Viking Age. And while this absence of evidence is no evidence of absence, there are numerous parallels from elsewhere in Atlantic Scotland of Iron Age fortifications being abandoned around the time of the Norse *adventus* (see above).

quarters at Appelcross and its hinterland on Skye,[45] the raids on the Columban *caput* of Iona are clearly stated. Indeed, from the 'plundering' of 795 (AI 795) and the 'violent death of Blamac' in 825 (AU 825.17; AC 822; ESSH I:263-5), Í Colluim Chille appears to have been attacked four times.[46]

When read alongside the florid embellishment of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (hereafter ASC) and the unapologetic anti-Norse propaganda of Middle Irish texts such as the *Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh* (*cf.* Ní Mhaonaigh 1996:101-26), the accounts of the Irish annalists seem remarkably terse and even objective. If, as might seem reasonable, these accounts are then taken at face value, they might appear to document nothing more than the repeated robbery of isolated and peaceful communities by violent gangs of marauding thugs.[47] In fact, there remains a general consensus in the British academic community that the Norse assailants of 'Celtic' Christian monasteries were little more than opportunistic pirates. But while such a methodologically naïve interpretation framed by convention in tired Romantic clichés and dramatic narrative style might be forgiven in the works of Victorian writers such as Howarth (1878:395-444) or Freer (1897:51-74), it must be considered one of the great shames of modern Viking Age studies that such a clear semantic dichotomy continues to pervade the discussion of the 'Vikings' and their 'victims'.

To adopt such a simplistic approach to such a complex issue, without also presenting objective analyses of the agents and institutions involved, is clearly unwise. Rather than tackling the issue directly, however, mainstream revisionism – as expressed by Sawyer (1971), Ritchie (1974), Owen (2004) and others – has sought instead to question the accuracy and general validity of the annalistic accounts. While accepting that Viking 'pirates' were violent barbarians, this 'Peace School' would argue that the violence was probably exaggerated by understandably annoyed and almost certainly biased commentators and was in any case a-typical of Norse activity in general.[48] As a result, the discussion of Norse raids in the Celtic world has come to focus on the relative levels of violence exercised by Norse and natives and not the clearly more fundamental issues of 'why' Norse violence manifests itself at the times and in the places recorded in the annals.

Considering the plethora of 8th century insular ecclesiastical artefacts recovered from high-status Norse graves in Norway (*cf.* Wamers 1983:277-306, 1998:37-72), it would perhaps be imprudent to argue that the documented raids in the Hebrides and elsewhere did not involve a certain element of unsanctioned

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[45] AU 795.3 *Loschadh rechrainne o geinntib 7 Sci do [cho]scradh 7 do lomradh* 'The burning of Rechru by the heathens, and Sci was overwhelmed and laid waste'. It has been argued that the phrase '7 Sci' is an error in place of an earlier 'agus a scrine' and refers not to the island of Skye – known in ancient times as Scitis (*cf.* Rivet & Smith 1979:452) – but to the 'shrines' of Rechru (Downham 2000:192-6).

[46] The other two raids being in AU 802.9 and AU806.8. While there appears to have been a further, unconnected attack on Iona towards the end of the 10th century (AU 986.3), this is taken by many as further evidence of Norse violence in the area in the intervening period (see below).

[47] See, for example, Smyth (1984:142-3, 1999:17-22) and Dumville (1997:12-15).

[48] Smyth and Dumville, on the other hand, are especially scathing of this kind of revision – insisting that the case for excessive and mindless Norse violence is proved by the gruesome content of most skaldic verse and many Icelandic saga episodes. Interestingly, neither extend this sentiment to similar episodes in earlier Irish texts such as the *Táin bo Cuillinge* or Old English material such as *Beowulf*. Nor do they entertain the possibility that the Icelandic material, written by later medieval Christian authors, was exaggerated or even staged for literary or moral effect (see below).

taking.[49] Neither can there be much doubt that this was often accompanied by what we today might consider excessive violence. To rationalise this most conspicuous aspect of Norse activity as the blind 'quest for moveable wealth' (Wormald 1982:134), however, fails to place these events in their proper Scandinavian or insular contexts.[50]

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While the origins of the Viking Age in Norway are complex and not yet fully understood (*cf.* Jones 1984; Helle 1993, 1998; Myhre 1993, 1998, 2000), they are unlikely to have been isolated from political developments in neighbouring areas. Recent historical and archaeological research in Denmark points to the existence of a centralised Danish monarchy 'a couple of centuries' before the first Viking raids (Näsman 2000:1-7,5), which appears to have taken a keen interest in the North Sea power politics of the time.[51] Although there are strong doubts as to the existence of a similarly centralised authority in Norway prior to the later Middle Ages (*cf.* Helle 1993; Skre 1998, 2001), it is clear from lavish boat-burials throughout the Norse expansion zone (*cf.* Shetelig 1954; Opedal 1998), that Norse society was developing along similar lines (*cf.* Slyngestad 1951).[52] With Norse magnates growing increasingly powerful by the late 8th and early 9th centuries (see below), there is no reason to believe they were not equally well informed of the political intrigues and opportunities of the outside world as their Danish neighbours – or that they were incapable of mounting overseas expeditions for political rather than simple piratical reasons (*cf.* Stylegar 2004:5-30). Indeed, without the patronage of men like this, there can have been few 'pirates' with resources enough to build the ships and equip the soldiers needed for far-flung 'raiding' expeditions.[53] In order to better understand the motivation behind the earlier raids, they must therefore be rationalised in terms of the political and military norms of the time. In the context of the early medieval *Gàidhealtachd*, this means closer scrutiny of the 'barbarian' Norseman's best-recorded target, the Celtic-Christian monastery.

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[49] It has nevertheless been suggested by Charlotte Blinheim (1978:173-7), that the ecclesiastic objects in these assemblages were traded and exchanged by the Irish themselves like any other insular commodity and that some of them were possibly even used as gifts or bribes in connection with conversion or missionary work abroad (see also Owen 2004:29). While this is an interesting proposition and certainly not one that should be dismissed out of hand, the indications from the documentary record point to a less consensual form of exchange (*cf.* Ó Corráin 1998b:438-9).

[50] It has been argued convincingly by Hedeager (1994), Samson (1991) and others, that 'trade' and the acquisition of monetary wealth in the formalist anthropological economic sense, was not a feature of the Scandinavian prestige economy until the later Middle Ages. To avoid confusion therefore, any further references to Scandinavian 'trade' in this thesis should be interpreted simply as 'exchange'.

[51] Per Hærnes (1997:57-67), for example, has argued convincingly for a connection between the documented power-politics of late 8th century Frankia and Mercia and a Danish origin for the raid on Lindisfarne in 793. The realisation that pre-historic Scandinavia maintained close ties with the outside world, however, is neither new nor restricted to the years before the Viking Age. Bog finds from sites such as Illerup Ådal in Jutland point to a socially and economically sophisticated society with leaders fully *au fait* with international diplomatic and military practise since Roman times and before. See, for example, Andersson & Herschend (1997) and Jørgen Ilkjær's various contributions to the Illerup Project – 'Illerup – mellem Nordkap og Nilen', 'Centres of power in Scandinavia before the medieval kingdoms', 'Fjender og orbundsfæller i romertidens Nordeuropa' – all available at http://www.illerup.com (accessed 26 November 2003).

[52] See also Carver (1998) for a discussion of closely related issues in Anglo-Saxon England.

[53] It must be wondered whether the Norwegian 'Central Places' (Myhre 1998:19-25) – also known as 'Court Sites' in the N of the country (Johansen 1989) – were not used as barracks for the armies of local potentates.

According to popular mythology, the standard Celtic Christian monastery on the eve of the Viking Age was small, isolated and staffed by feeble yet pious men devoted not to the material world but the selfless service of God (*eg.* Smyth 1984:143; Dumville 1997:10-14). While this may have been true in a limited number of cases, it was certainly not typical of the type of monastery known to have been attacked by the Norse. On the contrary, even superficial examination of the documentary record shows that many of these 8th and 9th century churches of Irish Christendom were not only 'rich and powerful [but] linked closely, perhaps too closely with the great' (Ó Corráin 1998b:428, 431). Of the first nine abbots of Iona, for example, eight were drawn from the same family as the *Cenél Conaill* kings of Tara (Byrne 1972:258). Far from being small and isolated places of religious contemplation, many Irish Christian monasteries were large and lively centres of trade and production (*eg.* Ryan 1988). Monastic organisation was not always wholly ecclesiastical in nature – leadership might be in lay hands and the *familia* or *muinter* of a saint was by no means limited to monks (Charles-Edwards 1996:39) – but neither was their operational remit purely spiritual (*cf.* Ó Corráin 1998b:429-30).

With battles for control of monasteries or punitive sackings to enforce hegemony appearing at regular intervals in the annals (*cf.* Charles-Edwards 1996:30; Ó Corráin 1998b:430),[54] it can hardly be doubted that religious leaders played an active role in secular affairs or that raids on churches played an important part in both the dynastic feud and the struggle for territorial control that already dominated Irish politics before the Viking Age. Of the 63 annalistic references to violent attacks involving churches in Ireland prior to 1170, 43 or 68% were conducted by the Irish themselves (Manning 2000:47-9) – at least 27 of these in the 8th century (Ó Corráin 1998b:430). While a further 6 were carried out by persons unknown, only 14 or 22% can be ascribed to 'marauding' Norsemen (Manning 2000:47-9), hardly indicative of Norse innovation or monopoly in this kind of endeavour. On the contrary, by raiding churches the Norse incomers were merely engaging in a long-standing native tradition of political subjugation. Regardless of whether the raids were carried out by natives or Norsemen, it is clear that they very rarely involved the killing of high-ranking clergy. A survey of ecclesiastical obituaries by Colmán Etchingham (1996:15) has shown that the rate of expiry of high-ranking churchmen remained virtually unchanged throughout the early medieval period – suggesting that the continued existence of these people was at least as important to the Scandinavians as it had been to their Gaelic-speaking counterparts, not just for their monetary value as hostages (*cf.* Smyth 1999:21-4) but as pawns in a game of international power-politics.

It has been argued by David Dumville (1997:10-14) that the blinkered focus and fragmentary nature of the documentary record belies a less sophisticated pattern to Norse violence. While he highlights monastic 'stack' sites as the most likely candidates for these unrecorded attacks (Dumville 1997:11-12), there is currently no evidence to support this theory. But if attacks of the kind on Skellig Michael in 824

[54]While the killing of 68 of the *familia* of Iona in 806 (AU 806.8) is often held out as a prime example of wanton, Scandinavian bloodthirstiness, this could hardly be said to be without native precedent – and pales into insignificance compared with the casualties recorded for the inter-monastic wars of pre-Viking Age Ireland (*eg.* AU 793.4; AU 763.1; 764.6; and AU 776.11). In AU 764.6, for example, 200 of the *familia* of Dermag are reported slain by the *familia* of Cluain Moccu Nóis.

(AU 824.9)[55] were shown to be commonplace, it would hardly strengthen the case for mindless Norse barbarism. Review of the surviving early medieval ecclesiastical literature by Colmán Etchingham (1999) has revealed that many of the humble anchorites of popular imagination were only permitted the indulgence of eremitic retreat on account of their high social status. As a result, they are just as likely to have been immersed in Irish power politics as their counterparts on the mainland.

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The prevailing tendency to view individual acts of Scandinavian aggression in almost complete isolation from these facts has served only to obscure their true significance. Recently, however, revisionist stirrings in the Irish and Scandinavian academic communities have highlighted the need for critical re-appraisal of the evidence (see Holm 1994:151-69 esp. 166-9; Jaski 1995:310-51; Hærnes 1997:57-67).

In his 1998 article on 'The Vikings in Scotland and Ireland in the ninth Century', Donncadh Ó Corráin (§26-34) draws attention to the political dimension of Norse activity in Ireland, picking out four distinct phases culminating in large-scale settlement. As Ó Corráin does not name all of these specifically, they will be termed here: 'reconnaissance, subjugation, occupation, and colonisation'. In this model, the early raids – such as those on Rathlin (AU 795.3) and St Patrick's Island (AU 798.2) – are seen as part of an intelligence gathering operation and testing of the waters. The subsequent escalation in numbers and violence – as illustrated by the more destructive attacks on the coastal monasteries of the Ulaid in the 820s (AU 821.3; 823.8; 824.9; 825.9, 10, 11, 12) and more general raids on 'forts and dwellings' (AU 837.3) and 'peoples' and 'estates' (AU 841.4) – represents a concerted attempt to break local resistance; with the appearance of major armies (*eg.* AU 836.7, 836.10) and the construction of *Longphoirt* (*eg.* AU 841.4) amounting to the military occupation, which enabled the colonisation of sites like Dublin and Waterford in the years that followed.

Considering the logistical problems of fleets containing scores of ships and hundreds, if not thousands, of men (see below), Ó Corráin (1998:§30) is probably correct in assuming that the occupation stage of this process was launched from the Hebrides rather than Norway. The conspicuous hiatus in Norse activity in Ireland between 811 and 821 certainly gives scope for a transfer of focus to the Hebridean arena and provides a plausible background for the mysterious Norse kingdom – known variously as *Laithlinn, Laithlind, Lothlend, Lochlainn etc.* – which had clearly been established by 853 when *Amhlaim m. righ Laithlinde* 'son of the king of Laithlinde' arrived in Ireland and asserted himself over the resident 'foreigners' (AU 853.2).

While the association of this *Laithinn* with the Hebrides is not yet universally accepted, it is not unreasonable to suppose that parts of the area at least had been 'occupied' by Norse armies as early as the

[55] Skellig Michael lies approximately 14km off the coast of county Kerry in SW Ireland.

830s. If this were the case, the frequent, early attacks on Iona would serve to emphasise not how soft a target it was to roving pirates, but rather the political significance of the Columban *familia* and its headquarters as the spiritual anchor of the *Cenél nGabráin* kings of Dalriada. Indeed, the raids of 802, which took place in the same year as the ordination of Cellach as abbot (AU 802.9) and 825, which saw the 'martyrdom' of Blamac (AU 825.17), have especially clear political overtones.

If the aim of these attacks was to destabilise the Hebridean establishment, they appear to have been successful. It can be little co-incidence that the obituary of Donn Corci, the last of a king of Dalriada to appear in AU is listed under 792.4 (see below) – two years before the first recorded Norse raid in the area. This would also explain why there are no further references to Norse raids of any kind in the Hebrides after the 'martyrdom' of Blathmac in 825.[56] While the monastery of Iona continued to function throughout the following centuries (*cf.* Jennings 1998:42-3), it must be assumed that the will of the local nobility, the political affiliations of Iona or both had been completely broken by the incoming Norse and that there was therefore nothing further to be gained from repeated attacks. Indeed, it must surely be significant in this respect that Amlaíb (ON Óláfr) Cuarán (G 'the crooked/ the stooped') – 'chief lord of the foreigners of Ath-cliath [=Norse Dublin]' – was able to retire and die peacefully there in 981 (AFM 979.5).[57] Moreover, as Ó Corráin (1998:§28) suggests, the devastating blow dealt to the 'men of Foirtriu' by heathens in AU 839.9 might then be seen as a redirection of energies by Hebrides based Norsemen after having completely subjugated the Isles. Interestingly, however, and notwithstanding the early subjugation and even occupation of the Isles, there are no hints at large scale settlement until 847.

In 847, the Annals of St Bertin (hereafter ASB) record the 'Northmen [getting] control of the islands all around Ireland and [staying] there without encountering much resistance from anyone' (Nelson 1991:65). This observation raises a number of important questions – first and foremost, what is meant by the phrase 'islands around Ireland'? Does Ireland refer to *Èriu* specifically or the *Gàidhealtachd* in general? Depending on our interpretation, the islands around it could be seen as the northernmost part of the Outer Hebrides, whose pre-Norse inhabitants were probably not Gaels but 'Peripheral Picts' (Alcock 1971). Alternatively, they could be equated with the Inner Hebrides, whose closest point – in Islay – is less than 40km from the coast of Antrim; or with the large number of small, inshore islands which flank the coast of Ireland. Of these three possibilities, the last seems least likely. Tales of Norse settlement on insignificant Irish islets are unlikely to have made the annalistic headlines hundreds of kilometres away in continental Europe. While the first possibility cannot be completely discounted, one must ask why there should be a sudden interest in events in this part of the world when it would not otherwise develop until

[56] A further, 'Danish', raid on Iona, recorded in AU 986.3, is far too late to be considered in the context of the initial colonisation process.

[57] AFM 979.5: *Amhlaoibh, mac Siotriocca aird-tigherna Gall Atha Cliath, do dhol co h-I dia oilithre, & a écc innte iar pennaind & deigh-bheithaidh*: 'Amhlaeibh, son of Sitric, chief lord of the foreigners of Ath-Cliath, went to Hi on his pilgrimage; and he died there, after penance and a good life'. See also AT 980 and CS 980. Although Seán Duffy (1992:95 FN 10) sees this as further evidence for Amlaíb's Gaelic credentials, his designation as 'chief lord of the foreigners' and ability to garner the support of the 'Lawmen of the Isles' (see below), suggests that Amlaíb and his administration were perhaps more comfortable operating in a Norse *milieu*.

the later Middle Ages. We must assume, therefore, that the islands in question included the Inner Hebrides. But why then might the focus of Norse activity have changed from raiding to settlement, and why, given the existence of a well-organised Dalriadan military machine, might so little resistance have been encountered?

An increasingly popular solution is to envisage two distinct periods of Norse activity involving two distinct types of protagonist, each with its own radically different agenda – in other words, that the barbarous pirates of the early 9th century gave way to a less violent class of immigrant farmers, far more open to relatively peaceful co-existence and ultimately integration with the local population (*cf.* Smyth 1984; Crawford 1987, 2000; Johnston 1990). Central to this argument in the Hebridean context is the appearance of the enigmatic *Gall Gaidheil*, literally 'Stranger Gaels', but with the more specific meaning of 'Norse-Irish',[58] in a cluster of references claiming provenance in the mid 9th century (Figure 7 below).

FA 856 (§247)	'Áed, king of Ailech, the king of greatest prowess in his time, gave battle to the fleet of the Gall-Gaedil (that is, they are Irish, and fosterchildren of the Norse, and sometimes they are even called Norsemen). Áed defeated them, and slaughtered the Gall-Gaedil, and Áed brought many heads away with him. And the Irish deserved that killing, for as the Norwegians acted, so they also acted'
AU 856.3	'Great warfare between the heathens and Mael Sechnaill, supported by the Norse-Irish'
AU 856.6	'Aed son of Niall inflicted a great rout on the Norse-Irish in Glenn Foichle and a vast number of them were slaughtered by him'
AU 857.1	'Ímar and Amlaíb inflicted a rout on Caitil the Fair and his Norse-Irish in the lands of Munster'
FA 858 (§260)	'Although Máel Sechlainn did not make this expedition to take the kingship of Munster for himself, it was worth coming in order to kill those Gall-Gaedil who were slain there, for they were men who had forsaken their baptism, and they used to be called Norsemen, for they had the customs of the Norse, and had been fostered by them, and though the original Norsemen were evil to the churches, these were much worse, these people, wherever in Ireland they were'
FA 858 (§263)	'A victory by Cerball son of Dúnlang and Imar over the Gall-Gaedil in Ara Tire'

Figure 7: Annalistic references to the Gall-Gaedhil in the mid 9th century

While these *Gall Gaidheil* were previously thought to originate in Galloway, the connection has since been debated (*cf.* Brooks 1991:96-116). Dumville (1997:26-9), for example, appears to favour Irish roots, observing that 'the timing [of their appearance] is absolutely spot on for the emergence of testosterone-filled 14 year-olds [conceived after the foundation of Norse Dublin in AU 841.4]'. Jennings (1993), on the other hand, suggests origins in Argyll (*cf.* Brooks 1991). The one thing that is relatively certain is that

[58] The G appellative *gall* (m) was originally reserved for inhabitants of continental Gaul. At some point after the Viking *adventus*, however, it became synoymous with Scandinavians. The designations *finni gall* and *dubh gall* appear to have been reserved for Norse and Danish 'Vikings' respectively. While it has been suggested this was indicative of the general appearance of these groups, as 'fair' and 'dark', it seems more likely, as Smyth (1974-7:101-17) suggests, that G *dubh* (adj), 'dark, black' was being used in the sense that modern English-speakers might use 'green' – *ie.* 'new' or 'inexperienced' – with *find* representing the conceptual opposite – *ie.* 'old, established'. This explanation accords well with the known appearance of Norse and Danish warbands in the Irish Sea area. It should also be noted, however, that by the end of the medieval period, the semantic association of the term had once again shifted, this time to connote 'Lowland Scot' or, more specifically, a Scot who cannot speak Gaelic (*cf.* Dwelly:474).

as the designation *Gaidheil* is and was reserved solely for speakers of the Gaelic language (*cf.* Jennings 1996:68) the dominant language in this union was Gaelic (*cf.* Jennings 1996:66-9) – a situation which seems to imply relatively peaceful interaction.

In view of the early Irish laws on status, however, and the associated importance of heritable property, it is difficult to see how there would have been room for even moderate numbers of conspicuously Norse settlers within the existing social structure. While it is possible that some were accepted as *céle* or 'clients' in the initial stages of settlement, the proliferation of Norse place-names in the area suggests the tables were soon turned. It is clear from the documented activities of Saxolb (AU 837.9), Tuirgéis (AU 845.8), Tomrair (AU 848.5), Amlaíb (AU 853.2 – FA 871), Ímar (AU 857.1 – AU 873.3) and others, that any large scale settlement in Ireland at least was followed, if not precipitated and closely controlled by, the appearance of a series of intrinsically violent Norse magnates intent on turning that movement to their own advantage. Indeed, the evidence from Anglo-Saxon England suggests that the first wave of settlement proper is likely to have come from the armies of the conquering warlords. In ASC 874, for example, we learn that Halfdeane, having invaded and subdued Northumbria, shared it out amongst his followers, who then proceeded to 'plough the land and make a living from it'.

The traditional view that Norse emigration was caused by an expanding population putting excessive pressure on limited resources has recently been called into question. Studies of settlement-sites and settlement-names in Norway have suggested that 'major expansion into marginal agrarian areas did not start before the late Viking Age and was particularly a feature of the high Middle Ages' (Myhre 1998:16). It might be argued, however, as Helle (1998:244-50) points out, that it was just this kind of population movement that took pressure off settlement in the homelands. Nevertheless, it would only be when the newly conquered areas in the West were completely secure that we might expect the migration of less violent farmers. And even then, given the stratified nature of Norse society, this should probably be likened to the controlled, English plantation of Early Modern Ireland (*cf.* Robinson 2000) or the later Cawdor Campbell plantation of Islay (Chapter 7), rather than a gradual accretion of transient peasants.

With friction between the Norse incomers and their native hosts likely, it might be argued that the reports of 'stranger Gaels' in military engagements in Ireland point to a more sinister type of social blending. After securing control of the Isles, the Norse warrior aristocracy would have been free to raise local peasant levies for use in their military expeditions – in which case, the *Gall Gaidheil* could be seen as ethnic Gaels fighting under the raven banner. There is no reason to imagine, however, that these individuals were recruited peaceably. On the contrary, it seems more likely from the restriction of 9th century references to *Gall Gaidheil* to a very limited period following the first accounts of settlement, that what they actually reflect is a 'clearing out' of the Hebrides, with the flower of Gaelic manhood being subdued, 'press-ganged' and sent overseas to die.[59] Simply because the *Gall Gaidheil* are recorded as

[59] Similar tactics were employed in the West Highlands and Islands by the British government following the Jacobite uprising of 1745. By actively recruiting 'angry young men' into new, Highland regiments, the anti-establishment cause was deprived of one

fighting on the side of Irish kings, or without the explicit guidance of Norsemen does not preclude Norse agency in their appearance. It is entirely possible that the Norse of the Isles deliberately aligned themselves against those of Ireland or Norway – perhaps in a mercenary capacity pre-empting the activities of the Galloglas kindred of the later Middle Ages.[60] The revulsion expressed towards this disenfranchised group by later Irish annalists could then be explained in terms of the provisions in UB, whereby a freeman who sold or lost his lands also lost his free status and presumably therefore the respect of his community (*cf.* Kelly 1997:423-4).

If Hebridean society was mixed and Gaelic was still the most important language at the time of the *Gall Gaidheil*, it is strange that the area should have been described as *Innse Gall*, the 'Isles of the Foreigners' – possibly as early as 851[61] and certainly by 989 when Gofraidh son of Harald is dignified '*ri Innsi Gall*'[62] – implying not just that its ruling element but also its *lingua franca* were Norse and that any cultural blending that had taken place was driven by Norse and not Gaelic agency.

The central place of Norse culture in this union appears to find further corroboration in two later 10th century entries in the *Annals of the Four Masters*. In AFM 960.14 we learn that:

> The fleet of the son of Amhlaeibh and of the Ladgmanns [(*na lagdmainn*)] came to Ireland, and plundered Conaille and Edar, with Inis-mac-Neasain; and the Ladgmanns afterwards went to the men of Munster, to avenge their brother, i.e. Oin, so that they plundered Inis-Doimhle and Ui-Liathain, and robbed Lis-mor and Corcach, and did many other evils. They afterwards went.

It has been suggested that **Ladgmann* (sg.) was originally a personal name – later a family name (and hence the plural form) – adopted from a Norse title by Hebridean speakers of Gaelic before being re-adopted by Norse incomers marrying into native stock (Munch 1874:50 N 2). Given the appearance of these *Ladgmainn* on a major military expedition led by the son of Amlaíb Cuarán, however, this explanation seems uneccessarily complicated. As Amlaíb and his dynasty are known to have striven after dominance in the Irish sea region and the Isles (*cf.* Duffy 1992), it is not impossible that they were able to gain the support of at least parts of the Hebridean population. That the *Lagdmainn* of AFM 960.14 were in fact its titular *lögmenn* (pl.) (ON 'lawmen, (legal) representatives' (*cf. lögmaðr/ laghmann* (sg.) in CVC:405)) is further suggested by AFM 970.13, where we are told of:

> The plundering of Inis-Cathaigh by Maghnus,[63] son of Aralt, with the Lag-manns of the islands [(*Lagmannaibh na n-Innsedh*)] along with him; and Imhar, lord of the foreigners of Luimneach, was carried off from the island, and the violation of Seanan thereby.

This Maghnus/ Maccus was the brother of the Gofraidh mac Arailt who was dignified *ri Innsi Gall* on his death in 989 (AU 989.4). If as seems likely, he too was an important player in Hebridean power-politics,

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of its most valuable assets. With the mobile 'warrior' element assimilated in this way, and quite possibly sent overseas to die for 'King and country', they would no longer be available to fight for the rebel cause at home.

[60] For an introduction to the Galloglas see Marsden (2003).

[61] According to Sellar (1966:135), if the term *Innse Gall* was not already in use by the mid 9th century, it may have been used in a consciously anachronistic way by the author of AFM 851.16 (see below) for the sake of clarity.

[62] AU 989.4: *Gofraidh m. Arailt, ri Innsi Gall, do marbad i n-Dal Riatai.* NB: The late usage of 'Dal Riatai' suggests that Gofraidh died in the Irish part of the old kingdom (*cf.* Woolf 2004:99).

[63] This reading of the personal name has been heavily criticised (*cf.* Munch 1874:50 N 2 FN 33).

it would perhaps be surprising for him to embark on such a major expedition without the support of its regional officials and possibly also its levies.

Attention can be drawn here to certain 16th and 17th century accounts of the Lordship of the Isles. According to Dean Monro in his 1549 *Description of the Occidental i.e. Western Isles of Scotland*, the Lordship of the Isles had a council of 14 of the region's leading lords, thanes and churchmen which met on Eilean na Comhairle in Loch Finlaggan (Monro 2002:310). In Martin Martin's late 17th century *A Description of the Western Isles of Scotland* this council is further described as 'The High Court of Judicature', consisting of fourteen judges and hearing appeals from all the courts of the isles (Martin 2002:148).[64] If the references to '*Lagmannaibh na n-Innsedh*' *etc.* in the Gaelic AFM are to a title, its patently Norse origins suggest that later administrative practise may have its origins in Norse custom. How far back this dates and how completely Norse innovation replaced local practise is difficult to guage on the basis of historical material alone. Certainly by the second half of the 10th century when the appearance of the sons of Harald and the activities of the Uí Ímar in the Isles appear to co-incide with a marked glut of Norse burials, hoards and other artefacts, it seems likely that Norse culture was firmly established among the upper echelons of society at least. There is no reason to assume, however, that the Norse subjugation and occupation of the Isles did not involve a more general clearance.

Given the fragmented nature of the Hebridean archipelago, it would have been quite possible for Norse fleets to surround and depopulate even larger islands like Islay. We know from various sources that the Norse of Dublin were actively involved in the slave-trade (Holm 1986:317-45; Smyth 1999:21-2; Hudson 1999:39-66) and presumably therefore always on the look out for new merchandise. It is also clear that they had the military means to acquire it. AU 837.3, for example, records two fleets of 60 ships apiece as being active on the rivers Liffey and Boyne in Ireland. By 849, the numbers had grown to 7 score (AU 849.6) and by 852 to 8 score (AU 852.3).[65] That such fleets were capable of large scale population displacement is attested in AU 871.2, which records the return of Amlaíb and Ímar (Óláfr and Ívarr) to Dublin from Alba with 200 ships laden with 'a great prey of Angles and Britons and Picts'. Although the later plundering of the monasteries around Kells by Gothfrith son of Sitriuc is not specifically recorded as having involved ships, Gothfrith's spoils are said to have included more than 3,000 men (AU 951.3). If these accounts are accurate and if the population of Dalriadan Islay was somewhere in the region of 5,000 (Chapter 2), it is not impossible that one concerted attack might have left the island deserted, let alone 50 years of 'raiding' and 'plundering'.

[64] The same information is provided by the 17th century Skye *seanachie* (McPhail 1914:25).

[65] There has been some debate as to the accuracy of these accounts. While Sawyer (1971:17,126), for example, accepted accounts of smaller fleets at face value, he regarded those numbering in the hundred as hyperbole. As Smyth (1999:4-9) points out, however, there is no reason why equal credence should not be given to larger numbers, when both corroborative accounts and similar examples are found in the annals of continental Europe.

A general subjugation strategy involving wide-spread clearance might also go some way to explaining the sudden reference to settlement *c.* 50 years after the initial reports of raids.[66] While this may have been an unplanned reaction to changing circumstances in the Irish sea region (*cf.* Crawford 1987:39-48), it is conceivable that clearance followed by settlement had already been on the agenda for some time, perhaps even from the outset, but was simply not possible until this point. A potential parallel to this situation can be found in the Anglo-Saxon invasion of the more southerly parts of Celtic Britain some 400 years earlier.

In a thought-provoking article from 2000, Bryan Ward-Perkins poses the question 'Why did the Anglo-Saxons not become more British' when the Franks, who made comparable inroads into late Roman Gaul, were quickly absorbed by the native population in all but name. His answer can be reduced to two salient points: first, because of the rapid de-Romanisation of southern British society in the years following the withdrawal of the legions; and second, because the Britons were able to mount a particularly successful resistance to the Germanic invaders over a number of generations. The first point is doubly important. As Ward-Perkins (2000:528) points out:

> Militarized tribal societies, despite their political fragmentation and internecine strife, seem to have offered better protection against Germanic invasion than exclusive dependence on a professional Roman army (that in the troubled years of the fifth century was all too prone to melt away or mutiny).

Paradoxically, however, it appears to have been by simultaneously divesting themselves of the physical trappings of Roman culture that the Britons doomed themselves to oblivion. When the battle-hardened Saxons finally wore down the British defences, they are unlikely to have mixed on easy terms with conspicuously ethnic Britons. As British society appears to have been organised on a permanent war-footing with every adult male a potential soldier, every adult male would have been considered a potential threat. Moreover, as a de-Romanised British culture had no advantages to offer the victorious Saxons, it is probable that social dichotomisation ensued (*cf.* Woolf 2000), with the culture and language of the indigenes being actively shunned by the new prestige group and thereby lost.[67]

A similar situation might be envisaged for the Hebrides. Having successfully weathered the Norse onslaught for two generations – inspired perhaps by the prospect of disenfranchisement, slavery or death – the tables might suddenly have turned on the local population. With the Hebrides generally lacking the monastic proto-towns and other cultural attractions of contemporary Ireland, there is no reason why the victorious Norse might feel the need to integrate into local society. Judging by the place-name and archaeological evidence, they appear to have done the opposite. Given the wording of ASB 847, however, it must be wondered whether the natives, or at the very least their rulers, were not complicit in the eventual surrender.

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[66] It may be significant that this reference comes within a decade of the first 'over-wintering' of Norse troops in Ireland in AU 839.7; and the establishment of the naval base, later town of Dublin in AU 841.4.

[67] Ward-Perkins (2000:528-9) contrasts this scenario with the situation in post-Roman Gaul, where the more superficial military resistance offered by the natives, fostered less antagonism amongst the invading Franks, thereby ensuring their early adoption of the prestige symbols and language of the late Roman Empire.

It is widely accepted that the *Cenél nGabráin* kings of Dalriada had already established themselves in the upper circles of Pictish society before the first Viking raids began (Anderson 1980:182-4; Smyth 1984:178-80; Hudson 1994:29-33).[68] In gravitating steadily and permanently eastwards, they would not only have been leaving their distant ancestral homelands open to attack by rivals from their own *cenél*, the increasingly powerful *Cenél Loairnd* in the N (Anderson 1973; Bannerman 1974; Hudson 1994) and expansionist Irish factions such as the *Cenél Eogain* to the W (*cf.* Ó Corráin 1998b:426-7), they would also have been leaving the Pictish heartlands of Fortriu open to attack by the back door at a time when the threat from expansionist Wessex in the S was growing steadily (*cf.* Smyth 1984:193-214).

As the incoming Norse nobility were, initially at least, alien to the entrenched power struggles of the region, they may well have been considered the lesser and more pliable of the four evils. If so, it is possible that Norse settlement with its constituent violent element was actively encouraged, either to strengthen the ruling dynasty's control of Dalriada or, more likely, to create a buffer-zone to protect more easterly Pictish regions from external interference.

It is interesting in this respect that of the four principal Dalriadan *cenéla* (*cf.* Dumville 2000), only the mainland-based *Cenél Comghaill* and *Cenél Loairnd* are commemorated in the local nomenclature – primarily the ancient district-names Cowal and Lorne. Similarly, while the *Cenél nGabráin* have left no onomastic mark on their ancestral homelands of Kintyre or Arran; and the *Cenél nOengusa* no trace of their name on Islay (*cf.* Figure 3 above), it is possible that the names Gowrie and Angus in the E part of the mainland represent the transplantation of redundant a nomenclature made available for recycling by the Norse take-over of the Isles.[69] The idea that the Inner Hebrides specifically and not Dalriada as a whole were abandoned to the Norse might also be supported by passages in the later medieval Icelandic sagas. In Chapter 4 of *Laxdœla saga*, for example, we are told of how Þorsteinn *rauði* (ON 'the red') Ólafsson:

> raided far and wide throughout Scotland and was everywhere victorious. Later he made a treaty with the Scots and became king over the half of Scotland they ceded to him.[70] (Magnusson & Pálsson 1969:51)

As Alex Woolf (2004:94) points out, it is possible that accounts such as this preserve a memory of the partitioning of Dalriada, perhaps at some point in the second half of the 9th century or early part of the 10th.[71] This would also explain the clear ethnic contrast in the neighbouring district-names *Innse Gall*, 'Islands of the Foreigners' (= the Hebrides), and Argyll, earlier *Airer Gaedel*, 'Coastline of the Gael' (Woolf 2004:94-5).

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[68] The validity of this assumption has more recently been challenged by Dauvit Broun (1998:71-83), see below.

[69] Considering that the area around Culross and Strathearn is described in Irish texts as being in *Comgaillaib* and that the rulers of later medieval Moray claimed descent from the *Cenél Loairnd*, it is possible that these place-names point to a partition of Pictavia by the four *primcenéla* of Dalriada (Woolf 2004:98).

[70] Problems with the reliability of saga evidence are discussed below.

[71] As Woolf (2004:94) also goes on to point out, the sharing of a kingdom between incoming Vikings and native dynasties is not without precedent. Similar arrangements appear to have been reached in several parts of England, including Mercia (the Midlands), Northumbria, East Anglia and possibly also Wessex.

The king of Picts at the time of the ASB account of Norse settlement was Cináed mac Alpín. According to SC, Cináed succeeded to the Pictish throne in 842 after two years as the king of Dalriada (see above). We are told in the 13th century *Chronicle of Huntingdon* (CH), that Cináed's father, Alpín, died *rex scottorum* while fighting the Picts on 22 July 834 (Hudson 1994:32). While both the veracity of the report generally and the verisimilitude of the title are open to question, it is interesting that CH should place the event in the year before AFM records 'Gofraith, son of Fearghus, Oirgialla, [going] to Alba, to strengthen the Dal Riada, at the request of Cinaeth son of Ailpin' (AFM 835.15). If the 9th century provenance of this account is accepted and Alpín's death in 834 is interpreted as a defeat, it is not surprising that his son should then take urgent steps to safeguard the family's position in Pictavia. He may even have done so at the expense of his 'native' Dalriada; in this particular case, by calling on the 'assistance' of Gofraith. If the testimony of AFM 851.16 is taken at face value, it must also be accepted that by the time Gofraith died around 851 and was dignified '*toiseach Innse Gall*' 'chief of the islands of the foreigners',[72] the isles were no longer a functional part of Cináed's domain.[73]

With a patronym like mac Fearghusa, it is probable that Gofraidh had strong Gaelic connections. Significantly, however, given the severalty of language and ethnicity at this time, his forename is not Irish but Germanic, possibly from ON Guðrøðr or Guðfriðr. While this does not in itself demonstrate that Gofraidh was a Norseman, it does raise the possibility that he also had strong Norse connections. It is conceivable in 835 that Gofraidh was the product of an early marriage alliance between Norse and Gaelic magnates in Ireland and as such perhaps able to command respect in both camps. Given Gofraith's position as 'chief of the Innse Gall', it might even be inferred that Cináed had actively encouraged the new regional identity of this area. By appearing to accept the incomers on their own terms, he might hope to win political support in a way which may not have been possible through force of arms. Cináed's ultimate disregard for the fate of the native community becomes clear in 849, when he has the relics of Columba removed from Iona (presumably to Dunkeld).[74] Although this was officially to protect them from Norse violence, it is difficult not to see the move as an attempt by Cináed to strengthen his own position in Pictavia through the appropriation and display of an ancient and politically sensitive symbol of power (*cf.* Bannerman 1997:27-44; Broun 1997:112-24).

It can be little coincidence that the only surviving account of Norse activity in Pictavia during Cináed's *floruit* should be listed under AU 839.9. Considering that this was the year before he became king of Dalriada, it is not unreasonable to suggest it was part of a wider alliance, precipitated perhaps by the (promise of) marriage of his daughter to Olaf the White of Dublin to help ensure Cináed's ascension to

[72] AFM 851.16: *Gofraidh, mac Feargusa, toisech Innsi Gall, d'écc.*

[73] If Broun's (1998:71-83) re-appraisal of the Dalriadan and Pictish king-lists is accepted, it is possible that previous assumptions of early 9th century Dalriadan intrusion into the upper ecchelons of Pictish society are flawed. If so, it must be conceded that at least part of the territory previously known as Dalriada had been absorbed into Pictavia by some point in the 9th century. And if this were the case, it would have been even easier for the distant Pictish kings to relinquish the Inner Isles to the incoming Norse.

[74] SC 849 (see also Hudson 1998:152 FN 4). The remainder were transferred to Kells, in Ireland, in 878 (AU 878.9).

the throne (*cf.* Cowan 1989:103).[75] As Cowan (1989:103-105) has already suggested, however, this alliance, if indeed there ever was one, appears to have been largely dependent on the personal qualities of Cináed himself. It was not long after his death in 860 before Norse-Pictish hostilities re-commenced. Amlaíb and Auisle's 'plundering' of Fortriu in 866 (SC 866), for example, could be seen as an inheritance claim directed against Cináed's sons Constantine and Áed. That hostilities continued for a further 50 years shows that this dispute was not effectively resolved.[76] Indeed, it was not until the reign of David I (1124-53) that mainland kings would once again feel powerful enough to chance the regional strategies employed by Cináed (or a near contemporary) more than three centuries earlier (*cf.* Duncan & Brown 1956-7). The main inference that can be drawn from this? Rather than seeing Dalriada as a bastion of Gaelic language and culture successfully weathering the storm of Norse encroachment, the insular parts of it would be better regarding as having been abandoned to the whim of the incoming foreigners. Unlike Ireland, where local kings had full authority to raise armies and lead them to war, the withdrawal of royal support in a centralised Dalriadan kingdom, or the absorption of the area into the kingdom of the Picts, may have left the locals without the authority, co-ordination or resources to continue a successful defence.

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[75] Cináed's pacification of the West does not seem to have extended to the *Danari*, presumably Danish Vikings, who are said to have attacked Dunkeld in the years between 842 and 858 (SC 842x58).

[76] AU 875.3, SC 875x6; SC 878x90; SC 903/4; AU 918.4

3.4.2 The early medieval West from a Norse perspective

While the preceding re-appraisal of events is based on insular material, it finds a certain amount of support in the surviving medieval Norse literature. Most of this comes from Iceland.

Although the bulk of the fairly homogenous body of West Norse prose literature known as the 'Sagas' was produced in Iceland between the 12th and 14th centuries, they are immersed in events of the Viking Age.[77] It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, given the physical and political geographies of the medieval Norse world, that they should touch upon aspects of Hebridean history. Of particular interest in this respect are the sub-sets of the genre known as the 'family sagas', or 'sagas of the Icelanders' (Ic *Íslendingasögur*) – which trace the ancestry of the great, the good and the interesting in Icelandic society from their origins in Norway to their exploits in Iceland and beyond during the so-called Saga Age (*Saga Öld c.* 930-1030); and the series of eulogistic biographies of the kings of Norway known as the 'Kings' Sagas' (Ic *Konungasögur*).[78] To this latter group can be added the anonymous Latin *Historia Norwegie* – even although it was probably written in Norway (Fisher *et al.* 2003:11-24) – and the composite family saga, *Orkneyinga saga* (OS), which tells the story of the 'jarls' or rulers of Orkney from Sigurðr Eysteinsson (*fl. c.* 874-90) down to Harald Maddadarson (d.1206) (Pálsson & Edwards 1981).[79]

While the combination of historical subject matter, terse presentation and naturalistic narrative style had convinced scholars by the 19th century that the sagas were nothing less than the written crystallisation of ancient oral tradition (*cf.* Liestøl 1930), it has since been widely accepted that even the most historically accurate examples of the genre must be seen as literary artefacts, consciously created by individual, albeit anonymous, authors (*cf.* Nordal 1953, 1957). Collections of 'contemporary' Icelandic sagas such as *Sturlunga saga* and *Íslendinga saga* may provide a generally reliable account of events in the 13th century – as does the unbroken series of (contemporary) Kings' sagas from Eiríkr Oddsson's oft-cited but now lost work of around 1150 to Sturla þorðarson's saga of *Magnús lagabœtti* (d. 1280). When dealing with the earlier period, however, neither historical detail nor chronology can be taken for granted. Indeed, it seems that as a general rule, the further removed the action from the time of composition, the greater the danger the author has arranged his material to suit the demands of taste and literary structure (*cf.* Pálsson & Edwards 1981:9-20; Crawford 1987:3-4, 7-9; Power 1997:14). Unless independent corroboration can be found in other (contemporary) sources, therefore, it is perhaps safer to look at the Icelandic and Norwegian material as preserving memories of more general trends in the historical narrative.

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[77] It should be noted here that while the sagas are largely prose compositions, they are more often than not punctuated with sections of skaldic verse (court poetry) which can itself contain tantalising snippets of historical information .

[78] Although Lönnroth (1964:9-32; 1975:419-26) warns against the strict division of saga material into these groups; it is nevertheless convenient to do so here, albeit with the slight amendment to the traditional remit of the Kings' Sagas noted above.

[79] Detailed epistemology of studies in family sagas can be found in Clover (1985:239-315) and more recently Ólason (1993:27-42). Students of the Kings' Sagas can find similar summaries in Andersson (1985:197-238) and Whaley (1993:43-64).

We are told in the 12th century *Historia Norwegie* that the Norse dominions in Scotland, the *Orchades insule* or 'Orkney Islands' comprised the *Brumales [Insule]* or 'Northern Isles' – *ie.* Orkney (*Orkneyjar*) and Shetland (*Hjaltland*) – and the *Merediane Insule* or 'Southern Isles' (*cf.* Fisher *et al.* 2003:64, 65) – the *Suðreyjar* of the sagas. Although the latter is routinely translated as 'Western Isles', it actually included all of the islands to the W of Scotland down to and most probably including the Isle of Man.[80] What we are not told is when exactly the overseas expansion began.

While it is a common theme in the saga literature that the Norse settlement of the West began '[i]n the discontent that King Harald [*hárfagri* (ON 'Fine-Hair') Hálfdánarson] seized on the lands of Norway' (*Haralds saga hárfagra* Chapter 20), this must be considered dubious. Although the extent to which Harald (*c.* 852-932) actually did become king of a unified Norway is now under debate (*cf.* Helle 1993:10), his advent as ruler of a large part of it appears to have been such a watershed in Norwegian history that the activities of previous Norse magnates in the West have either been forgotten or conflated with those of Harald (*cf.* Sawyer 1976:105-9; Smyth 1984:155; Crawford 1987:55-6). Thus Harald's expedition to subdue the Vikings in Shetland, Orkney and the Hebrides – recorded in Chapter 22 of his saga – may well be confused with the activities of earlier magnates such as Óláfr *hvíti* (ON 'the white') Ingjaldsson and Ketill *flatnefr* (ON 'Flat-Nose') Bjarnarson.[81] Óláf, for example, is known from the annalistic evidence to have begun his quest for domination of the Irish sea region while Harald was still a babe in arms.[82] And while Ketil is described in *Eyrbyggja saga* as a reluctant captain of Harald's who conquered the Hebrides on his behalf before 'making peace and alliances with all the leading men in the West' (Pálsson & Edwards 1989:25-6), sending the royal troops back to Norway and openly usurping his position, it seems likely that his *floruit* in Hebridean affairs also preceded that of Harald by a generation or more. In fact, as the sources unite in describing the marriage of Ketil's daughter Auð[83] *in djúpúðga* (ON 'the Deep-Minded') to Óláfr *hvíti*, there are grounds for equating Ketil himself with the Caitil find (G 'the white') who appears in Ireland in conjunction with the Gall-Gaidheil in AU 857.1.[84]

Despite references to early military activity in the West by the likes of Ketil, his grandson Þorsteinn *rauði* Ólafsson (*cf.* Pálsson & Edwards 1981:27-8), Harald Fine-Hair (*Haralds saga hárfagra* Chapter 22) and several others, the sagas have remarkably little to say about the process of settlement or the subsequent character of insular society. There are indications, however, that this involved military occupation[85] and possibly even 'ethnic cleansing'. According to *Historia Norwegie*, the enigmatic *Peti* and white-robed *Pape* who inhabited the *Orcades* before the Norse were 'totally destroyed [by Ragnvald jarl who stripped]

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[80] This much at least seems likely from the early boundaries of the diocese of Sodor, established around 1100 (see Chapter 7). There is a possibility, however, raised by the presence of Norse place-names along the western littoral, that the designation *Suðreyjar* once included large tracts of the Scottish mainland (*cf.* Crawford 1987:65).

[81] See, for example, *Eyrbyggja saga* (Pálsson & Edwards 1989:25-33); *Laxdœla saga* (Pálsson & Edwards 1969:47-67); and *Landnámabók* (Pálsson & Edwards 1972:22-3)

[82] According to Smyth (1977:101-16) Óláfr can be identified with the *Amlaib Conung* (from ON *konungr* (m) 'king') of the Fragmentary Annals; the same Amlaib who appears to have rallied the *finni gall* against the *dubh gall* before capturing Dublin in 853 and establishing himself as king (see above).

[83] In some sources, such as *Laxdœla saga*, Auð is called Unn.

[84] See, for example, Smyth (1984:154-8). Crawford (1987:47), on the other hand, is less certain.

[85] In Chapter XXIII of *Magnúss saga Berfœtts*, for example, we are told that Magnús '*setti menn sina til landsgœzlu, þar er hann hafði unnit*' (Aðalbjarnarson 1951:233).

them of their long-established dwellings' (Fisher *et al.* 2003:66,67). It must be wondered, of course, whether this episode was not invented by later medieval historiographers to explain a process of which they had no knowledge or which was simply expedient to gloss. According to Crawford (1987:47), for example, the reality is more likely to have been drawn out and achieved in part by small groups of raiders using a technique known in the Icelandic sagas as *nema nesnám* or 'headland taking' whereby isolated headlands were fortified and used as raiding bases (CVC:453). It should be noted, however, that while Crawford sees the headland dykes of Orkney as evidence of this process in operation, similar structures in the Hebrides are usually classified as pre-Norse, Iron Age defence works (Chapter 2 and Appendix I).

Unfortunately, there are no correspondingly vivid observations on the pre-Norse population of the (Inner) Hebrides. It has already been suggested that some were killed, conscripted into military service or sold into slavery in the markets of Dublin. The saga material does, however, raise the possibility that others still were simply driven away. According to Björn Cripplehand, for example, the advancing armies of Magnus Bare-Foot caused the inhabitants of Islay to flee 'south of Kintyre' (see Figure 6 above). Although this particular event dates to the late 11th century and could potentially have been created for literary effect, it would not be unreasonable to suppose that similar things happened during the early part of the Viking Age. Attention can be drawn here to a passage from the Ermentaire's 'life' of St Philbert concerning the Norse attacks on the isle of Noirmoutier at the mouth of the Loire in France. In 1834, the inhabitants were so terrorised by the *vestfaldingi* '[men] from Vestfold in the Oslofjörd' that they 'preferred to flee rather than running the risk of extermination'. For a long time afterwards the abandoned island was used as a base by the Norsemen (Jennings and Kruse 2005:260).

Arguments have nevertheless been made for less disruption and greater continuity in the population and institutions of this area (*cf.* Johnston 1990). Particular attention has been drawn in this respect to the description of its rulers in the *Historia* as 'kinglets' (Fisher *et al.* 2003:64, 65) rather than the 'jarls' we might expect from contemporary Orcadian and regional Norwegian practise. While this could be taken to imply an Irish (or Daldriadan) style social structure (Chapter 2) – which might in turn imply more far-reaching cultural blending – it might also be seen as a projection of 12th - 14th century realities back into the distant past. By the mid 12th century there are certainly references to a '*rí*' of the Isles, Man and Dublin. And there is a possibility, raised by certain later medieval texts such as *Rigsþúla*, that Christian Irish concepts of kingship helped filled a void in contemporary Norse practise (Ó Corráin 1998b:421-5). As we have already seen, however, the entry in FA corresponding to the AU 853.2 description of Ólaf *hvíti* as *Amhlaim m. righ Laithlinde* ('son of the king of Laithlinde') refers to him as *Amlaíb conung* – from ON *konungr* (m), 'king' – suggesting that even if the theory behind this office was Gaelic, it had been realised in a linguistically Norse *milieu*. It might be imagined, moreover, that such an institution was deliberately adopted by the more powerful Norse migrants for reasons of political expedience. By styling themselves 'kings' of *Laitlhinn, plurimarum insularum*, Man, Dublin *etc.* – whether this was initially as ON *konungr* or OIr *rí* – Norse magnates might hope to slot in at the apex of pre-existing tribute gathering systems (Chapter 8).

Despite reference to Norse kings in Dublin and Man, the regularity with which the Hebrides themselves are said to have been raided by successive kings of Norway and jarls of Orkney appears to hint at a lack of centralised authority (*cf.* Johnston 1990:18-19). In Chapter 13 of LNB (Pálsson & Edwards 1972:22-3), for example, we are told that Harald Fine-hair conquered the Isles but that as soon as he had gone back to Norway they were invaded by 'Vikings, Scots and Irishmen', who set about 'plundering and killing everywhere' – thus necessitating the reclamation of the area by Ketil Flat-Nose. The difficulty which absentee overlords seem to have had controlling the area is further illustrated in Chapter 270 of LNB (Pálsson & Edwards 1972:110-11), where we are told that Harald entrusted the care of the *Suðreyjar* to a jarl called Tryggvi and then soon afterwards to another called Asbjörn (or Asgeirr) *skerjablesi* (ON 'forelock'). As both of these men were killed in quick succession – the later by relatives of Ketil Flat-nose who also captured his wife and sold his daughter into slavery – the indication is that neither their position nor the authority of the Norwegian Crown was particularly well respected. This can be compared with the episode in *Flóamanna saga*, set around 980, when jarl Hákon of Lade, who was then ruling Norway, sent Þorgils Þorðarson and Þorsteinn *hinn hviti* (ON 'the White') to the *Suðreyjar* to collect land-taxes which had not been forthcoming for three years.[86]

It is also around this time, with Norwegian interest in the Isles beginning to fade, that the sagas report an increased interest on the part of the jarls of Orkney. Following his succession to the earldom *c.* 985, Sigurðr *digri* (ON 'the Stout') Hlöðvisson is said to have quickly set about expanding his dominion to include large tracts of the northern Scottish, the *Suðrejyar* and possibly Man.[87] Having done so, he appears to have extracted tax from the region. In Chapter 85 of *Njáls saga*, for example, we learn that Sigurd's retainer Kari Solmundarsson had taken land-tax in the Suðreyjar from a certain Earl Gilli (Magnusson & Pálsson 1960:182-3) who is later associated with Coll (Chapter 89 – *ibid.*:196) and said to be married to Sigurd's sister.[88] Once again, however, it seems unlikely, from the need of Sigurd's son Þorfinnr *inn ríki* (ON 'the Mighty': d.1064) to 'win' the Hebrides in Chapter 32 of *Orkneyinga saga* (Pálsson & Edwards 1981:75) that Orcadian control of the area was ever particularly secure. Indeed, considering that no mention is made of Orcadian sovereignty in any insular or contemporary sources, the reliability of these claims is open to question. Nevertheless, a point of even greater significance, and one which is rarely mentioned, is that the absence of one centralised authority in the Hebrides during this period need not imply that local ethnicity was anything but Norse.

Although the Norse sources make no direct comment on inter-ethnic relations in the Hebrides during the Viking Age, they do have a certain amount to tell us about language use amongst the area's social elite. First we have the examples of literature produced by individuals likely to have been native to the area.

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[86] '*heimta skatta mina af Suðureyjum er ég hefi mist um þrjá vetur*' *Flóamanna saga* Chapter 15.
[87] The possible extent of Sigurd's domains are discussed at length by Crawford (1987:65-7).
[88] In Chapter 89 of *Njál's saga*, the sister is Nereið (Magnusson & Pálsson 1960:196). In Chapter 154, however, the sister's name is given as Hvarfloð (*ibid.*:.341).

The poem *Hafgerðingadrápa* (ON 'Lay of the Sea Mountain'), for example,[89] is attributed in LNB to an anonymous Christian Hebridean who sailed to Greenland with Herjólf Barðarson (*cf.* Jennings 1996:70 & FN19). Then there are the two fragments of skaldic verse by Orm *Barreyjarskáld* (ON the 'Bard of Barra') preserved in Snorri Sturluson's *Edda* (Faulkes 1987:89, 91). These can be taken alongside the runic memorial on the Kilbar cross-slab – commemorating a certain þorgerð Steinarsdóttir (NMRS:NF70NW3; Barnes 2004:130-2, 137) – to suggest that Norse language and culture were alive and well in Barra throughout the 10th and into the 11th century (Faulkes 1987:241; Close-Brooks & Stevenson 1982:43). The possibility that Norse was in use among the prestige element in more southerly parts of the Hebrides is raised by the runic memorial stone from Iona – commemorating a certain Fogl Olvísson (RCAHMS 1982:190; Jennings 1992; Fisher 2001:130; Barnes 2004:130-2, 137) – and the mention of a Björn 'fra(:)kuli' on the Manx stone Andreas I who may have come form the isle of Coll (Page 1983:140; Barnes 2004:131). Unlike some later Manx inscriptions, which might show Gaelic influence (*cf.* Page 1983), perhaps the most 'unusual' aspect of the Hebridean inscriptions is the apparent weakening of unstressed end vowels. According to Barnes (2004: 135), this may have been a feature of demotic Norse in the Isles.

As far as the sagas are concerned, language use or, more specifically, problems of mutual intelligibility between Icelanders, Norwegians and native Hebrideans do not appear to have been an issue worthy of note. Just as the Icelanders visiting the Hebrides do not appear to have used interpreters, neither are any of the Hebridean or Manx chieftains who visited Norway described as having language difficulties (Power 1997:22). Indeed, from the time we encounter the earliest Hebridean chieftain, jarl Gilli of Coll, in the late 10th century, to Holboði Hundason in Tiree in the mid 12th,[90] the leading members of this society are all presented – by name or circumstance at least – as Norse (*cf.* Jennings 1996:71-2; Power 1997:21-2).[91] Crucially, there are no references to native speakers of Gaelic. And while this cannot, of course, be taken as conclusive evidence that the population at large was Norse-speaking, so conspicuous is this ommission that it must be wondered whether the sagas might not preserve a general memory of Norse linguistic dominance in the Isles during this period. It is only in Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla* account of 12th century Norwegian king Harald *gilli* (Gillikristr Haraldsson), that the Norse of Ireland is presented as linguistically deficient. If Snorri's description of Harald's Norse speech as 'halting' is accepted as evidence of secondary language use by a native speaker of Gaelic, it would have significant bearing on Norse language use in the Hebrides that such a situation had not come about until the 12th century. More likely, although just as significant, however, is that this particular detail is based on Snorri's (1179-1241) personal contact with late 12th or early 13th century Hebrideans (Power 1997:15).

[89] Only two fragments of this work now survive – one in *Landnámabók* (LNB) and the other in *Grœnlendinga saga*.
[90] Holboði appears in *Orkneyinga saga* in connection with the Hebridean Norseman Sveinn Ásleifarson (*cf.* Pálsson & Edwards 1981: Chapters 66, 67, 78, 79, 82).
[91] See, for example, the English language translations of *Eiríks saga rauði* (Magnusson & Pálsson 1965), *Eyrbyggja saga* (Pálsson & Edwards 1989), *Laxdœla saga* (Pálsson & Edwards 1969), *Njáls saga* (Magnusson & Pálsson 1960) *etc.*

This evidence for language-use can be extended to include the limited number of references to Hebridean place-names in the saga material.[92] The accounts of Magnus bareleg's expeditions of the late 11th and early 12th centuries and those of Hákon IV Hákonarson in the mid 13th century[93] provide a reasonably detailed list of the major inhabited islands and peninsulas to the west of Scotland.[94] Thus we learn that the Norse names for Lewis, Uist, Skye, Mull, Tiree, Islay, Bute and Kintyre, for example, were *Ljóðhús*, *Ívist*, *Skíð*, *Myl*, *Týrvist*, *Íl* and *Sátíri*. While it is possible that some of these names, such as *Ljóðhús*, are innovative or even commemorative ON coinages (see below),[95] it is clear that others, such as *Skíð*, *Myl*, *Íl* and *Sátíri* are phonemic adaptations of existing native names by speakers of Norse. *Myl* has clear antecedence in the *Malaos* and Skye in the Scitis of Ptolemy's 2nd century AD *Geographia* (*cf.* Rivet & Smith 1979:409,452); *Íl* is an almost exact rendering of the *Ile* preserved in Adomnán's late 7th century *Vita Columbae* (see above); and *Sátíri* is a transparent rendering of the topographically appropriate G *Sá-tire*, 'land's end or heel', which later became the G *Ceann-tire* 'land's head' or Kintyre with which we are familiar today (*cf.* Henderson 1910:27-8). This adaptation of native names need not, however, imply a continued G presence in the islands. A number of likely pre-Norse survivals in the nomenclature of the Northern Isles including the archipelago-name Orkney (Rivet & Smith 1979:433-4) and the names of the three northernmost islands in Shetland – Yell, Unst and Fetlar (*cf.* Kruse, Forthcoming:155-8) – show that the adaptation of pre-existing names is no barrier to an otherwise complete process of ethno-linguistic disjuncture.[96]

Interestingly, while several dozen Orcadian settlement and nature-names are mentioned in OS alone,[97] the entire *corpus* of saga material, which makes frequent reference to the *Suðreyjar*, lists only one Hebridean location more specific than an island-name. In one of the many sections of skaldic verse quoted by the author of OS and attributed in this case to Arnórr *jarlaskáld*, contemporary and associate of 11th century Orkney jarl Thorfinn the Mighty, we are told of an important battle won by Thorfinn and his nephew jarl Rögnvaldr Brusason at a certain Vatnsfjörðr. Although it is clear from the context only that this battle-field lay in 'the Hebrides, Ireland, [or] the wide area in the west of Scotland' in which Thorfinn and Rognvald had raided that summer' (Pálsson & Edwards 1981:60), it has now been identified with Loch Vatten in Skye (Pálsson 1996:20). The survival of this name alone perhaps best illustrates the very peculiar bias of the Icelandic material: *ie.* places and events are mentioned only to the extent they accord with the interest of the Orcadian or Norwegian establishment, with this information in turn only being preserved because both Norway and Orkney had important intellectual and political centres which attracted Icelandic poets – the 'principal tradition bearers in Northern Europe' (Pálsson 1996:21). As nothing like Trondheim and Bergen in medieval Norway or Birsay and Kirkwall in Orkney ever existed

[92] Guðmundsson (1997:72-7) discusses the total number of insular place-names noted in the saga-literature.
[93] See Snorri Sturluson's *Magnúss saga berfœtts* and Sturla Þórðarson's *Hákonar saga Hákonarson* respectively.
[94] Although the earliest surviving versions of the verse eulogises of Magnús bareleg's expedition are preserved in the compilation of Kings' sagas known as *Mörkskinna*, they were re-arranged by Snorri Sturluson in his Heimskringla version of *c.* 20 years later to reflect the correct order of the islands from North to South (Pálsson 1996:19-20).
[95] Pálsson (1996:22-3) raises the intriguing possibility that this otherwise enigmatic island-name was in fact coined for the most important centre on the island in commemoration of the market town of *Ljóðhús*, now Gamla Lödöse, located in the vicinity of modern day Gothenburg in Sweden.
[96] This theme will be discussed in more depth in Sections 2 and 3 below.
[97] See, for example, Pálsson & Edwards (1981:247-51) and the map on the following pages.

in the Hebrides, the area finds itself under-represented in the Icelandic material.[98] Nevertheless, it is significant that this one name should be Norse.

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In an attempt to temper this potentially distorted picture of almost complete 'Norseness', attention is often drawn to the Icelandic *Landnámabók* or 'Book of Settlements'. Although the now lost original took the form of a list detailing some 430 of Iceland's *landnámsmen* 'principal settlers',[99] around 3,000 of their dependents, where they came from and where they are thought to have settled, the earliest surviving redactions of it – preserved in the *Sturlubók* and *Hauksbók* MSS respectively – are interspersed with passages of prose narrative detailing their genealogy and accomplishments (*cf.* Benediktsson 1996:373-4; Pálsson & Edwards 1972:5, 8). The fact that a number of them are described as *vestrœnn* ('Western') or *suðreyskr/ suðreyingr* ('Hebridean') who may have been *skírð/ kristinn* ('baptised/ Christian') (*cf.* Guðmundsson 1997:101-120) and/or brought with them 'Irish' wives or slaves (Sigurdsson 1988:28) is often cited as proof that the areas of Norse settlement in the Inner Hebrides were ethnically mixed (*cf.* Johnston 1990:6). Taken on their own merits, however, these accounts tell us nothing of the sort.

There is no reason to believe that the 'Irish' wives or slaves of this group represent the indigenous population of the Hebridean *Gàidhealtachd* as opposed to Ireland proper. In his analysis of pottery from the Udal in North Uist, Alan Lane (1983, 1990) has revealed a remarkable discontinuity between the Dark Age and Viking Age typology (Lane 1983:379). So great, in fact, is this change that it appears to indicate new potters. As this new pottery has close similarities in date and style to the northern Irish souterrain ware assemblages from Co. Antrim, it is possible that the Norse learned to make it in Ireland before moving to the Outer Hebrides (Lane 1983:348). Perhaps more likely, however, as Lane also suggests, is that the Norse imported slaves from Ireland to make the pots for them.

The description of a settler as 'Western' or 'Hebridean' can only be taken to imply that he or she was an ethnic (or aspiring) Scandinavian previously domiciled in the West generally or the Hebrides specifically. Although several of these individuals have Gaelic personal-names – such as Kalman (G Colmán) in Chapter 42 (Pálsson & Edwards 1972:32) – it is implied by the names and behaviour of their progeny that these men and their families were otherwise fully representative of Norse culture. The same can also be said of the few Irishmen listed in LNB. In Chapter 20 (Pálsson & Edwards 1972:25), for example, we learn of a certain Avang the Irishman who was 'the father of Thorleif, father of Thurid, wife of Thormod' – *ie.* hardly a champion of Gaelic culture or language. Where Norse families do show an occasional preference for G personal-names, they are often amongst the very highest levels of Icelandic society and

[98] As Pálsson (1996:20-1) points out, the same is also true for Shetland and the Faroes: despite the Icelandic *Færinga saga*. Perhaps surprisingly, the historical data in the latter appears to have been gleaned by Icelanders in Norway.

[99] According to Ari *frodi* (ON 'the learned') Þorgilsson in his *Libellus Islandorum* ('Little Book of the Icelanders' – although more commonly and erroneously shortened to 'Book of the Icelanders'), Iceland was settled from Norway in the days of Harald Fine-Hair (Benediktsson 1968:4), with the process beginning *c.*870 and being complete by the foundation of the Icelandic *Alþing* in 930.

as such likely to have had dealings with, or at the very least delusions of grandeur resulting from previous dealings with, foreign nobility. The saga observations that Ketil Flat-nose's family was Christian and that his son Helgi *bjólan* and great grandson Óláfr *feilan* had Irish by-names (*beulan* 'little mouth' and *fáelan* 'little wolf') need not suggest that they were immersed in a mixed Gaelic-Norse environment in the *Suðreyjar*. While these names might well be indicative of a strong Irish influence on the family in the early part of the Viking Age (*cf.* Smyth 1984:162-3), it seems just as likely that this would have arisen through Ketil's dealings with the Gaelic magnates of Ireland, either directly or indirectly through the connections of his son-in-law, Ólaf the White, in Dublin.

Finally, although numerous Norse Hebrideans may have adopted Christian practices prior to the official Conversion by Óláfr Tryggvasson in the dying years of the 10th century – and the inevitable and increasing institutional promotion of the Gaelic language which would have followed (see Chapter 8) – there is no reason why such a development should point to substantially mixed Norse-Gaelic communities rather than Norse communities whose leaders imported their Christian beliefs from Ireland or allowed Iriish monks to undertake missionary work amongst their people. Although the Scandinavian style interlace patterns on cross shafts from Dòid Mhàiri in Islay[100] and Iona have been taken as evidence both continuity of local tradition and early cultural blending (*cf.* Lamont 1972:20-3), it should be noted that interlace pattern is of the Ringerike type not thought to have been common before the turn of the 11th century. Rather than pointing to early conversion therefore, this hints that the local Norse nobility may not have adopted Christian practise before they were finally forced to.

The limited nature of early conversion is also implied by the treatment of Norse converts in *Landnámabók*. Take, for example, Ketil's brother Hrapp. According to Chapter 15 of LNB (Pálsson & Edwards 1972:23-4), Hrapp gave his son Örlyg 'in fosterage to the Holy Bishop Patrick of the Hebrides'. As no such bishop is known, it must be assumed, as is suggested by Pálsson & Edwards (1972:23 FN 20), that this is an allusion to St. Patrick of Ireland and points to prestige dealings with the Irish Christian Church. The connection with Irish Christianity is emphasised in Örlyg's decision to emigrate to Iceland and 'build a house and a church dedicated to St. Columba' (Pálsson & Edwards 1972:23). The political nature of this conviction, however, is revealed in Chapter 399 (Pálsson & Edwards 1972:147) where we learn that 'in most families this didn't last, for the sons of some built temples and made sacrifices and Iceland was completely pagan for about 120 years'.[101]

3.4.3 Conclusions

As we have seen, none of the historical evidence provides a particularly detailed picture of Norse activity in the Hebrides during the Viking Age. By reading between the lines, however, it is possible to isolate certain general trends in this process which might prove useful in contextualising Norse settlement in Islay. The most prominent amongst these is that it is likely to have been a violent and socially exclusive

[100] See notes on Tighcargaman in Kildalton in Appendix I.
[101] *ie.* until the Conversion of 999/1000 (*cf.* Benediktsson 1968).

business. Unfortunately, the extent to which the population at large became Norse-speaking is not clear. As neither the sagas nor the annals point to a Gaelic speaking community in the Isles prior to the rise of Somerled, however, it is reasonable to assume that those locals who did not quickly adapt to the cultural and linguistic standards of their new Norse overlords were very quickly pushed to the bottom of the social hierarchy. Rather than assuming that Gaelic language and culture continued to dominate the Inner Hebrides between the Dalriadan dynasties of the 8th century and their MacSorley counterparts in the 12th, we must therefore allow for a period when Norse language and culture reigned supreme.

SECTION II: PLACE-NAME STUDIES

Introduction to Section II

Although place-name material has featured heavily in previous assessments of Norse settlement in the Inner Hebrides, the most recent studies (*eg.* Nieke 1983; Johnston 1990; Jennings 1993) have relied on the etymologies and interpretational models of earlier writers. This approach will not, however, be followed here. Regardless of how important the works of Thomas (1881-2), Gillies (1906), Henderson (1910), MacBain (1922) and even Nicolaisen (1969, 1976 *etc.*) may have been in their day, the intervening decades have seen steady and in some cases significant advances in the theory and practice of place-name research. The purpose of this section, therefore, is to re-assess the theoretical and methodological issues involved in the study of settlement history through place-names generally and how this can be applied to Islay specifically. It will begin, in Chapter 4, with a brief review of the theoretical background to place-name studies comprising a definition of the term 'place-name' and an overview of the characteristics that make place-names such a valuable asset in the study of Norse settlement in Islay. This will be followed, in Chapter 5, by a critical appraisal of the Islay sources, leading to a model for settlement historical investigation. The more practical, methodological issues involved in the collection and classification of place-name and related data will then be discussed in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 4: BASIC THEORY

4.1 What is a name?

As the basic theory of place-name research has been set out in meticulous detail elsewhere,[102] it will suffice to summarise the most relevant issues here.

Grammatically speaking, all names, whether place-names (toponyms) or personal-names (anthroponyms) are nouns. While it is relatively easy to distinguish the members of this word-class from those of others – *eg.* adjectives, verbs, adverbs *etc.* – there is, as yet, no universally agreed criteria whereby 'names' can be distinguished from other nouns. This lack of a universally accepted definition has led to a certain amount of conceptual blurring in this field. Although names proper correspond to the *nomen proprium* or proper noun of classical Latin grammar, terminological confusion with the *nomen appellativum* or common noun has resulted in the extension of the term 'name' in popular usage to cover certain categories of common noun such as bird-'names', plant-'names' *etc.*[103] To avoid confusion, therefore, the term 'name' will be restricted here to the proper noun (proprium) and defined in contradistinction to the common noun (appellative).

Common nouns are first and foremost conveyers of lexical meaning. This characterising or appellative function serves to identify the commonalities in different classes of object, entity or phenomenon, whether real, imagined, corporeal or abstract. In the words of Gammeltoft (2001:17) they 'connote'. Thus 'keyboard', 'text' and 'theory' are all common nouns. Proper nouns, on the other hand, do not connote. Rather than convey lexical meaning, they function primarily as abstractions covering the multitude of unique and fluid characteristics which denote individualities as opposed to commonalities in both language use (*la parole*) and the language system (*la langue*) (SNF:11-12).[104] While these abstractions can in turn convey lexical meaning, as would result, for example, from the literal or metaphorical discussion of the 'Alans' or 'Spaldings' of this world, it is their capacity to act as lexically void 'address tags' which is of particular interest here.

The effective absence of lexical meaning makes names extremely resilient (SNF:17-18; Nicolaisen 1977:147). As they do not have to be understood as anything other than 'address tags', they can exist as purely phonological entities and thereby survive language shift or even (partial) population displacement. In addition this, as all place-name elements are formed from the standard word-material, grammar and

[102] While the English-speaking student of place-names is served by a wide selection of journal articles, book chapters and conference proceedings (see, for example, Simon Taylor's reading list on http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/institutes/sassi/spns/classtxt.htm (accessed 30/06/04)), there is as yet no single text providing systematic coverage of place-name theory and methodology. In this respect at least, UK based research has fallen considerably behind that of Scandinavia, where the niche is filled by several texts, including Christensen & Kousgård Sørensen's excellent *Stednavneforskning I: Afgrænsning, Terminologi. Metode, Datering*, hereafter SNF.

[103] See, for example, Dalberg (1989:34-46), which is précised in English in Gammeltoft (2001:16-17).

[104] According to this definition, 'names' such as 'pigeon', 'ash' *etc.*, are not in fact names proper, but appellatives.

syntax available in the source language at the time and place of their creation,[105] they are usually coined with a specific, appellative function in mind. It is this combination of original, appellative function and intrinsic resilience that make place-names such a valuable asset in the study of Norse settlement in Islay. Although the language and culture of the island are traditionally Gaelic and have been for at least 600 years,[106] the vestigial memory of a Norse cultural identity has survived in such palpably Norse place-names as Margadale, Lyrabus, Conisby *etc.* (see below). With proper treatment, local nomenclature could therefore yield valuable clues as to the minimum extent of Norse settlement on the island, the geographical origins of the of the Norse settlers, their economic and social status, how they interacted with the native population and perhaps even how long they maintained an ethno-linguistically Norse identity in the face of encroaching Gaeldom (Chapter 7).

4.2 What's in a name?

Place-names can be divided into two principal categories for the purposes of this kind of research: cultural names – amongst which settlement or habitative names are the most important – and nature or topographic names. Further and more detailed distinction can be made on the basis of syntax and onomastic structure. Although numerous different systems have been devised for the study of Gaelic and Norse names (*cf.* Cox 2002:15-42, SNF:15-16), the needs of the present investigation will be better served by a simpler, unified approach. At their most basic, therefore, place-names will be taken to consist of a simple generic element, such as ON *dalr* (m), 'valley', and its grammatical affixes, *eg.* ON *dalir* (nom. pl.). These uncompounded forms will be known as simplex. Where the generic is qualified by a specifying or descriptive agent, *eg.* ON *eik* (f), 'oak-tree', the resultant forms, such as ON **Eika(r)dalr* ('Oakdale') will be known as compounds. This second category will be overlapped by a third in respect of Gaelic names where the specific and generic parts of the name stand in grammatical relation to each other. These *phrasal* names can be formed with or without an article or preposition, *eg.* **Eilean na Muice duibhe* (*cf.* Watson 1904:xl-xli).

If enough is known about the suspected source-language(s) of a name, a process of comparative historical-philological analysis (Chapter 6) can help to establish the ethnic background of the name-giver(s): *eg.* whereas Kintra in Kildalton appears to derive from an original G **Ceanntràigh*, meaning 'head of the strand', Bolsa in Kilmeny appears to derive from an earlier ON **Bólstaðr*, meaning 'farm' (see Appendix I). In an Islay context, where the ethno-linguistic background of the island's name-giving community appears to have changed from Gaelic to Norse and then back to Gaelic again, a distinction must also be drawn between formally primary or independent names – which are intrinsically new coinages – and formally secondary or dependent names – which include or are based upon pre-existing name material (SNF:17-18; Cox 2002:31-42).

[105] albeit with several important differences such as the lack of article (SNF:9-11).
[106] The earliest document recording the colloquial language of the island's prestige group is the charter of 1408, whereby Donald, Lord of the Isles, granted lands in Kildalton to Brian 'Vicar' MacKay. This was written in Gaelic (BI:16-18).

Where a formally secondary name appears to comprise word-material from more than one different language, the relationship between its appellative and *ex-nomine* onomastic units[107] – *ie.* its new and pre-existing name material – can hint at the relative periods of productivity of the different source languages. In the case of Dùn Bhoraraic, for example, there can be little doubt that speakers of G have coined a formally secondary *dùn*, 'hill or small fort', compound by adaptation of a pre-existing ON **Borga(r)vík* 'Bay of the fort'. It has to be stressed that Dùn Bhoraraic is not a Norse name. Although the onomastic unit 'Bhoraraic' is almost certainly derived from a Norse original, its appearance in a formally secondary or dependent name means that it can no longer be regarded as a name in its own right. It is, in the words of Cox (1988-9:3), an 'erstwhile name' (see also SNF:70-9). Equally significantly, however, the presence of this kind of onomastic unit can be taken as evidence of the previous existence of a formally primary Norse name and thus of a Norse speaking name-giving community in the vicinity which has subsequently come to speak or been (partially) replaced by speakers of Gaelic.

The presence of ON *ex nomine* onomastic units in Islay place-names can also help to chart the mode of transmission of place-name material from one language group (or stage) to another. The farm-name Glenegedale, for example, has been formed by the addition of G *gleann*, 'valley' to a pre-existing ON **Eika(r)dalr* 'Oak-dale', giving an apparent meaning of 'Valley of the Oak Valley'. Until recently, this kind of effective tautology would have been treated as the conscious product of a bi-lingual society – *ie.* as a 'hybrid' name (*cf.* Cox 1988-9).[108] On the more stringent application of onomastic criteria, however, it seems more likely that they point to a complete disregard for or lack of understanding on the part of the G speaking name-giver(s) of the original appellative meaning of the local Norse nomenclature. According to Cox (2002:43-8), this kind of tautology is most often explained by *transference*, 'the phenomenon where a place-name is transferred from one feature to another' (Cox 2002:45, 1998:22-8). For this to happen, however, a name must first of all have become completely or temporarily lexically void – what Beito (1986:153) describes as a pure *proprium*. The existence of this kind of name in large enough numbers would point to a reasonably stable Norse speaking community adopting Gaelic, perhaps in response to a late influx of prestigious Gaelic speakers, or being gradually replaced by incoming speakers of G over a relatively short period of time. An absence of Norse names with G *ex nomine* onomastic units, on the other hand, might point to a marked lack of meaningful contact between the initial Norse settlers and their native 'hosts' (Chapter 7).

The community which creates and/or maintains a given place-name is known as its 'user group'. Although User-Group theory has only recently made an appearance in Scottish onomastic circles (*cf.* Kruse 2004), it was first developed by Norwegian philologist Magnus Olsen in the 1920s and 30s.[109] According to Olsen's (1934:10-12) definition, all place-names can be assigned to one of three broad

[107] The term '*ex-nomine* onomastic unit' is further defined by Cox (1988-9:3, 2002:36-9). This is supplemented by the '*epexegetic* onomastic unit' familiar from Scandinavian research (*cf.* SNF:76) – the pleonasm attached to pre-existing place-name material, *eg.* the 'Glen' of Glenegedale.

[108] Another common form of dependent farm-names in Islay are those created by the addition of a contrastive modifier such as *mor* (G 'big') or *beg* (G 'small') to pre-existing name material (*cf.* Cox 2002:35-6).

[109] *cf.* Olsen (1926,1928,1934 *etc.*).

categories: *gårdens navn*, *bygdens navn* and *veiens navn* ('the names of the farm, the names of the district and travellers' names') – each with its own range of user groups. Thus, while the names of minor topographical features on a given farm at a given point in time – such as streams, hollows, sheep-folds *etc.* – might only be known to individuals living and working on that farm, those of more conspicuous topographical features – such as larger hills, rivers and roads – might be known to everyone in the district. Olsen's argument that certain specialised groupings – such as merchants, pilgrims and fishermen – might also create names on passing through a community has been the subject of ongoing controversy in Scandinavia (*cf.* Fries 1989:35-46; Stemshaug 1997:254-65). It is precisely this aspect of User-Group theory, however, which has loomed largest in recent overviews of Norse settlement in the Hebrides.

Perhaps the most well-known application of this theory is WFH Nicolaisen's (1969:16-7, 2001:122-4) claim that the isolated Norse nature names in this area are not in fact indicative of permanent Norse settlement but rather seasonal exploitation by transient Norsemen. The rationale behind this idea is no doubt based on the flawed assumption that Norse settlement in the Hebrides came second to small-scale raiding and trading. As with Olsen before him, however, Nicolaisen can be criticised for failing to make a clear distinction between the inspiration for name-giving and the process by which names become implanted in the landscape.

Although modern maps and atlases carry a large number of widely used travellers' names like The Straits of Magellan, Easter Island, The North-West Passage *etc.*, the bulk of these have been imposed by modern map-making cultures on illiterate, native peoples. While examples of this name-type have also survived from more distant times – most pertinently Norway, 'the North Way' – these are not only few and far between but limited to major topographical features along important travel routes (*cf.* Kruse Forthcoming:102). Very rarely do we find them attached to smaller scale features of the type represented by the Hebridean and West Highland *-dalr* names. As these features were nevertheless important in a local context, it must be wondered why local people might accept and preserve the assumed travellers' names for them.

Once a name has been coined, it will, only continue to exist within its respective user-group(s) as long as there is a need for it. When that need disappears, so too will the name (*cf.* Kruse 2004:102-3). Take, for example, the Swedish rapid-names on the river Dneipr recorded in the mid 10th century writings of the Byzantine emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus. While clearly coined by Swedes travelling between the Baltic and Black Seas, most likely as traders, there is no trace whatsoever of Scandinavian antecedence in the modern rapid-names (*cf.* Flak 1951). The reason for this is clear. Once the Swedes stopped using this route in large numbers, their names were forgotten and the local names, which had no doubt always existed in the background, rose to the fore to be recorded by later map-makers.

Bearing this scenario in mind, it is difficult to accept that transient Norsemen in the pre-map making cultural era of the Viking Age could attach names to relatively insignificant natural features in the alien

and most probably hostile cultural landscape of the Hebrides that would survive *in situ* in the days after they finished using them, let alone the centuries. Neither can they be seen as the result of native 'scouts' relaying Norse names back to their own communities (*cf.* Nicolaisen 2001:122). If the Norse did employ local people in their reconnaissance, we would expect local name-material to get adapted into the Norse nomenclature – not *vice versa.* The survival of Norse place-names of any type beyond the Viking Age must therefore be seen as a reflex of stable ON user groups, which, having established themselves in the areas where the names were coined, maintained their Norse cultural identity long enough to 'implant' them on the surrounding landscape. Only then, and following their adoption of the Gaelic language and/or partial displacement by speakers of Gaelic might we expect these names to change form or disappear. For this to happen, however, the emphasis must be on substantial population continuity with the re-introduction of Gaelic as a prestige language.

While both settlement and nature names can thus provide important clues as to the geographic spread of Norse settlement in Islay, the pattern of settlement development is better reflected in the former. Settlement names can be further classified as either topographic or habitative depending on whether the generic element reflects a natural feature or a man-made structure or environment. In the case of habitative names, semantic analysis of the generic can reveal useful information about the social or economic basis of the settlement. Although it is perhaps not surprising that most habitative generics from pre-industrial times connote agricultural settlement – *eg.* ON *staðir* (m pl), *bólstaðr* (m) and *setr* (m) or G *baile* (m), *àirigh* (f) and *achadh* (m) – others – such as G *cill* (f) – connote religious establishments or administrative centres. Where these habitative generics are supplemented by a specifying agent, the same kind of analysis can be even more revealing. The specific in Neraby, for example, from ON **Niðrabýr* meaning 'Netherton', points to the relative location of the settlement, that in Cornabus, from ON **Kornabólstaðr* meaning 'corn-farm', that the most noteworthy output of the farm was once corn; and in Conisby in Kilchoman, from an original ON **Konungsbýr*, that the farm-district was once associated with a *konungr* (m) or 'king' (see Appendix I).

Even when the information gleaned from this kind of lexical-semantic analysis is limited, study of a settlement name in its proper environmental and cultural contexts can be used to gauge the relative economic potential of the site and thus the local importance of the name-giving group. An extreme example of this is Thomas' (1874-6:503-504) assessment of Norse settlement in Lewis. As there were then virtually no 'important places' bearing Gaelic names on the island, Thomas concluded that the local population must have been cleared and the best land seized by the incoming Norse (*cf.* Henderson 1910:185). While this assessment might seem morbid, it should once again be stressed that place-names are generally capable of surviving shifts in language or ethno-linguistic identity. Take, for example, the numerous Gaelic place-names on modern OS maps of Anglophone Scotland. When the local place-names of an area disappear, however, or are replaced by foreign examples, it is quite possible, as we know from North American history, that the causal factor was population displacement (*cf.* Kruse 2004:103-4). As a

result, the survival of even a loose distribution of Norse place-names *in situ* would require a much greater density of Norse language use and name-giving practices in times gone by.

Considering that the Norse settlement of Islay took place in a fully developed cultural landscape (Chapter 2), it is unlikely that the introduction of Norse place-names will have coincided with the first usage of a given area. As a result, if it were possible to rank a given area's Norse and Gaelic names in terms of chronological order, it would also be possible to make a more objective assessment of the extent of ethnic disjuncture which followed the Norse *adventus*. If an area had a large proportion of Gaelic place-names, for example, and if most of these could be shown to pre-date the Viking Age, this would suggest that the Norse impact on that area was minimal. If on the other hand, the majority of an area's Gaelic names could be shown to post-date the Viking Age, this might point to a more complete Norse take-over. As a consequence, the dating of place-names has featured heavily in previous studies of Norse settlement in Scotland.

While the dating of place-names can, in theory, be absolute[110] – as is the case with Port Charlotte in Kilchoman and Port Ellen in Kildalton[111] – this is rare in an Islay context. For the vast majority of names relevant to this study, the date of coining can only be estimated relative to another event. The material providing the appropriate *terminus* can be either internal – *ie.* linguistic (*cf.* SNF:163-93) – or external – *eg.* extra-linguistic (*cf.* SNF:194-226). As internal dating is based on general philological principals, it can be applied to any type of name (Chapter 7). When it comes to extra-linguistic dating, however, there is much less scope for dating nature-names than habitative-names.

Hill-, valley- and other nature names are rarely featured in early documents or maps. Nor, for obvious reasons, do they accumulate the breadth of fiscal data associated with habitative names in rental and taxation lists. While Marwick (1952:227) was therefore partly correct to claim that '[n]ature-names [as a class] do not provide any data for chronological placing' (*cf.* Alcock & Alcock 1980; Johnston 1990), a distinction must be made between nature names *per se* and settlement names with topographic generics. As the evidence for human habitation at these latter sites is no different from that for settlements whose names have habitative generics, they can be approached in exactly the same way. It should be noted here that settlement names with topographic generics account for many of the most prestigious sites in Norway (Kruse 2004:105-6), the Northern Isles (MacGregor 1986:86-7; Thomson 1987:26), the Faroes (MacGregor 1986:86-7) and a large number of the earliest Icelandic settlements (Bandle 1977:47-68).

[110] The basic principles of place-name dating are set out in SNF (163-226). But see also Brink (1984) for a slightly more up-to-date history of research in this field.

[111] Both villages were planned by Walter Frederick Campbell of Shawfield, laird of Islay, in the early 1800s. The former, which dates to 1828, was coined in honour of his mother, Lady Charlotte Campbell (RCAHMS 1984:297-8) and the latter, which dates to 1821, in honour of his wife (RCAHMS 1984:299-300).

The theoretical basis for extra-linguistic dating can be traced to a series of late 19th century Scandinavian research papers (*cf.* Brink 1984:19-23). Although some of these,[112] such as the 'earliest extant reference' method, are relatively self-explanatory, they offer nothing more than the broadest *terminus ante quem* for settlement development. It is of little value in the study of Norse settlement in Islay to note that the name Bolsa must have been coined *before* it was first recorded as *Spulse* in 1507 (Appendix I) – when this is at least three centuries after the end of the island's Norse period.

A far more productive approach is provided by the so-called 'fiscal' method of extra-linguistic dating. While the sophistication of this approach has grown considerably in recent years (*cf.* SNF:208-14; Sandnes 1973:12-28), the basic premise remains as follows. As the first settlers in any given area will have chosen sites with the best overall capacity to support a human population. As a consequence, they tend to accumulate wealth earlier and on a larger scale than later settlements on less favourable land resulting in higher rental or taxation values or development into important secular or religious centres. Although this model was developed with virgin landscapes in mind, it can also be applied in certain circumstances to previously settled areas. Given what is known about land-holdings and social status in the early medieval *Gàidhealtachd* (Chapter 2), for example, we can assume that the earliest Norse settlers in Islay will have acquired at least some of the best land in their respective settlement areas, whether they were given it or simply helped themselves.

A useful variant on this theme is the 'geometric' method developed by Jöran Sahlgren in the 1920s (*cf.* SNF:214-8; Farbregd 1984:33-50). Sahlgren's technique builds on a series of assumptions, principally that: any given region was originally divided amongst a small number of large, 'primary' farms; that the boundaries between them were largely determined by natural features; that over time settlement expansion led to the development of 'secondary' farms within the boundaries of the primary holdings. Although this in turn would gradually obscure the original settlement centres and their boundaries, Sahlgren argued that if suitable (*ie.* pre-agrarian revolution) cartographic material was available illustrating later boundaries, it would then be possible to reconstruct the original primary landholdings by grouping together their secondary divisions.

While this approach has been criticised on the grounds that it paints an overly simplistic picture of settlement development and relies on boundaries which might not be original, it can nevertheless provide a useful supplement to the standard fiscal analysis of settlement sites – especially in the reconstruction and analysis of administrative boundaries and their ethnic origin (Chapter 8). The main drawback in applying this or indeed any other form of qualitative or quantitative analysis to Viking Age settlement is the retrospective nature of the approach. As the assessment of Viking Age conditions on the basis of data from later periods rests on an assumption of stability in environmental and other conditions which is not

[112] SNF (194-226), for example, lists 11 discrete categories of non-linguistic dating, including: *Overleveringsmæssig*, *historisk*, *geografisk*, *topografisk*, *geologisk*, *agrarhistorisk*, *statistisk* (statistical = fiscal), *geometrisk*, *index-datering*, *administrationshistorisk* and *arkæologisk*.

always justified, the results must therefore be regarded as a guide to and not an absolute barometer of previous conditions. In the absence of other more objective evidence, however, it is the only productive approach open to this particular line of settlement historical research.

The practise of relative dating as a means of tracing settlement development was pioneered in Scotland by Magnus Olsen (1926, 1928) and fellow Norwegian A.W. Brøgger (1929, 1930) in their respective studies of Norse settlement. Olsen surmised on the basis of Icelandic saga evidence that there were two major waves of Norse emigration to the Northern Isles: the first from Møre – resulting in the coinage of ON -*bólstaðr* and *-setr* names – which was then followed by a second from W Agder – leading to the introduction of *-land* names. The idea that a chronological sequence of settlement generics could be reconstructed through a process of fiscal analysis, however, was first explored in detail by the Orcadian place-name scholar Hugh Marwick.

Marwick's combined analysis of late 15th century rentals and the geo-spatial characteristics of the sites listed in them, led him to suggest a 9 point 'scale of ancestral dignity' (Marwick 1952:249) for ON settlement generics in Orkney (Marwick 1952:227-51). One of the stated applications of this 'scale' – which began with *kví* and progressed through *setr*, *land, garðr, bólstaðr*, *staðir*, *skáli* and *bú,* before culminating in *bær* – was to help date sites where fiscal data was not available. In the late 1960s, Marwick's chronology was adapted by WFH Nicolaisen to cover Scotland as a whole. Working with the OS 1:50,000 scale series, Nicolaisen took the spatial distribution of the generics *staðir*, *bólstaðr* and *setr* to reflect the expansion of Norse settlement over time. According to Nicolaisen (1969:9-11), the numerically limited yet diffuse distribution of *-staðir* names was indicative of an early phase of settlement; with the more widespread distribution of *–setr* names reflecting a final stage of settlement expansion (*ibid.*:11-14); and the even denser distribution of *-bólstaðr* names representing the maximum extent of Norse settlement in Scotland (*ibid.*:14-16).

Although pioneering at the time, and a continuing source of inspiration to students of Norse settlement in Scotland, both Marwick's chronology and Nicolaisen's adaptation of it are nevertheless open to criticism. While it is now agreed that settlement names with topographic generics are likely to belong to the earliest and most prestigious onomastic strata, both Marwick and Nicolaisen refused to include names with topographic generics in their schemes. More serious still, however, is the emphasis placed by both on a simplistic, evolutionary model of settlement development.

The idea that the Norse settlement landscape began as a series of central nodal points and expanded outwards over time, with newer sites becoming smaller and more peripheral in the process, derives largely from the so-called 'Urgård' model familiar from Scandinavia research (*cf.* Pilø 2000).[113] While it certainly provides a tidy theoretical framework for the study of settlement development, it seems likely

[113] The *Urgård* model of settlement development was devised by Sigurd Grieg (1926) and Magnus Olsen (1926).

from what is known of the Icelandic *landnám* that the reality was rather more complicated. If the evidence of *Landnámabók* is accepted, the initial settlers of Iceland claimed much larger areas than they could hope to utilise themselves. This land was then sold, rented or gifted to subsequent groups of immigrants, who thereby entered into socially subordinating relationships with the original *landnámsmen* (*cf.* Durrenberger 1991; Vésteinsson 1998). Local variation in the level and intensity of this internal development might therefore lead to different staples of settlement-type and thus place-name generics being introduced at different times in different regions.

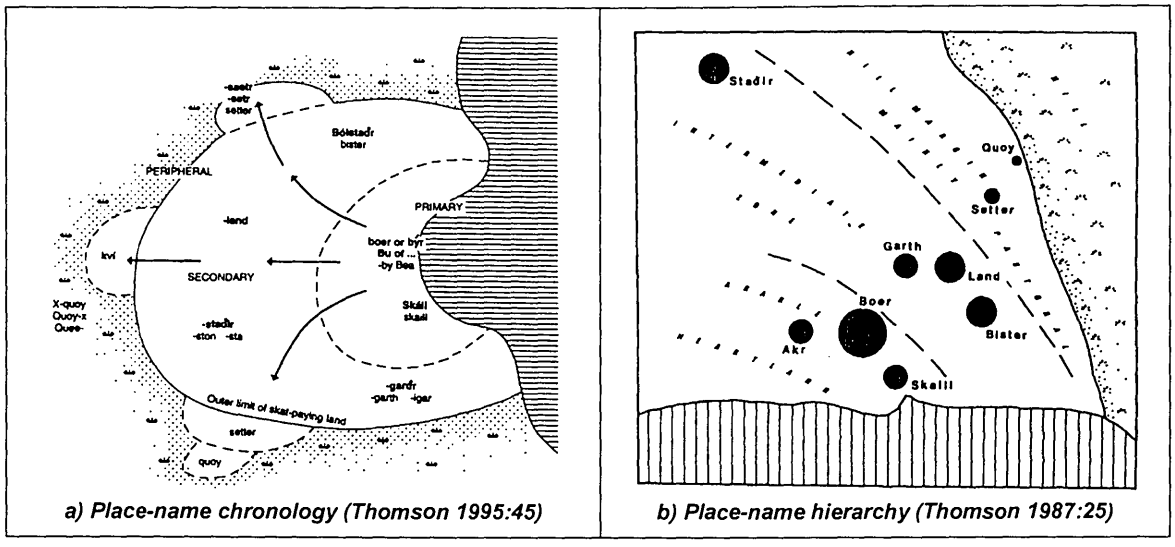
It has been shown by Lindsay MacGregor (1986; 1987), for example, in her study of Faroese farm-names, that the presence or absence of certain generics from certain areas tells us more about environmental constraints on settlement development than its timescale. But although Nicolaisen (1984:364) has since conceded that the 'more limited distribution [of a given place-name generic] is not always [...] an indication of an earlier linguistic stratum, just as density in distribution is not always a sign of a late phase', not even these qualifications go far enough in addressing the basic problems with the evolutionary model of settlement development.

Even where isolated early settlements are concerned, it is unlikely that subsequent expansion would have been strictly evolutionary. Application of Christaller's central place theory to Scandinavian place-name material by Brink *etc.* (Brink 1996:235-81, 1997:389-437; Fabech 1998:455-73) suggests that Norse emigrants of the Viking Age were used to structured communities centred around chieftains' residences or 'central places'. Although this type of community may have taken centuries to develop in Scandinavia, it is likely that Norse immigrants in Scotland would have created theirs much more quickly (*cf.* Stylegar 2004:5-30). Indeed, when the first so-called primary farms were established by prestigious settlers and their extended households, there is no reason to imagine that they would not have been equipped with shielings, hunting lodges and all of the other amenities required by their aristocratic patrons *from the outset.*[114] Neither is it unreasonable to imagine that these different parts of the estate would have been given names.

Given that Norse settlement in Islay took place in a fully developed settlement landscape, there would be even greater scope for the simultaneous exploitation of different types of ecological zone. As a result, we must allow for the possibility that the establishment of socially and economically secondary settlements in any given area was simultaneous with that of their primary counterparts. It follows that central/ large settlements need not always be early and that peripheral/ small settlements need not always be late. As Thomson (1987:27;1995) quite rightly points out, therefore, Marwick's chronology is probably best seen as a chronology rather than a hierarchy, with his scale of ancestral dignity illustrating the socio-economic connotations and interrelationships of certain place-name generics rather than their place in a fixed chronological sequence (Figure 8 above). As with a chronology, however, this hierarchical model must be

[114] See, for example, the description of Hrafnkell Halfreðarson's farm, Aðalból, in *Hrafnkels saga freysgoði* (Jónsson 1963:82-3).

tempered to take account of the extremely long period of time during which ON naming traditions remained active in certain parts of Scotland[115] and the fact that changing fashions in naming traditions have seen different generics acquire different connotations in different areas over the course of that period. Attention can be drawn here to the striking difference between the usage of ON *skáli* in Orkney and Shetland. While it is usually associated with economically primary sites in the former, it tends to designate peripheral and insignificant sites in the latter (Thomson 1987:32).



a) Place-name chronology (Thomson 1995:45) *b) Place-name hierarchy (Thomson 1987:25)*

Figure 8: Schematic plans of Marwick's scale: a) as a chronology; b) as a hierarchy

[115] In Shetland, for example, all of the generics in Marwick's chronology except *staðir* appear to have remained active beyond the medieval period (Thomson 1995:48-9).

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH MODEL

5.1 Introduction

Settlement development in an area as large and ecologically varied as Islay is likely to have been so complex that it would be impossible to devise a universally valid chronology of place-name generics. That is not to say, however, that there are no generics or name-types generally which could function as effective chronological markers. As with other aspects of human culture, place-name elements are likely to have come in and out of fashion on a time limited basis and could in certain circumstances help to establish relative chronologies. By selection of an appropriate body of place-names and comparative study of their linguistic and extra-linguistic characteristics, therefore, it might then be possible to isolate:

1. Areas where we might expect to find evidence of Dalriadan survival into the Norse period, or the post-Norse re-introduction of Gaelic ethnicity.
2. Discrete phases of settlement development within the Norse period itself, such as its opening and closing stages.
3. The ethnic origins of Islay's pre-modern land and territorial divisions and whether these point to continuity or disjuncture in administrative boundaries or practise.

Before gathering data of any kind, it is first of all necessary to establish a framework within which the various different sources can be collated and analysed. Ideally, this would involve the collection and detailed investigation of every place name on Islay (*cf.* Stahl's 1999 onomastic survey of Barra and Cox' 2002 survey of the place-names in the Carloway Registry area in Lewis). Unfortunately, given the nature and time constraints of the present study, the assembly and analysis of such a large body of data is not feasible. While this might point to the efficacy of a more limited regional survey comprising one or several distinct parts of the island, the peculiarities of Islay's physical environment combined with the somewhat polarised results of Olson's 1983 study of Norse settlement (see below) highlight the need to avoid over-extrapolation. As the main focus of this project is settlement history, the solution will be to concentrate largely, although not exclusively, on settlement names.

5.2 Source material

The earliest extant documents containing references to Islay settlement-names include a charter in Gaelic from 1408 and several others in Latin and Scots, from the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th centuries. Perhaps even more useful from the point of view of settlement analysis, however, are the series of Crown and local rentals dating from the early 16th to the early 19th centuries and the Valuation Roll entries which followed.[116] These cover a much larger part of the island in much greater detail than many

[116] The majority of relevant extant documents have been transcribed and published in compilations such as: the Exchequer Rolls, the Registers of the Great and Privy Seals, the Register of Sasines, Retours, Cosmo Innes' *Origines Parochiales Scotia*, G.G. Smith's *Book of Islay*, Lucy Ramsay's *Stent Book of Islay* and Frida Ramsay's *Daybook of Daniel Campbell of Shawfield*. The few extant manuscripts which remain unedited can be found amongst the Islay Estate Papers or the National Archives of Scotland (*eg.* the

of the individual charters and provide information on the 'extent' (see below), annual rental value and perceived agricultural quality of the farm-districts which could help in establishing a socio-economic profile for site and name-type alike.

These documentary sources are supplemented by an array of cartographic material ranging from Forlani's map of 1558x1566 through the original Ordnance Survey 6" to the mile scale map of 1878 to the modern Landranger and Explorer sheets.[117] As the majority of the early maps focus on the Hebrides in general rather than Islay specifically, they tend to show little more than a rough outline of the island and a handful of its more important settlements. And while others, such as the map of Islay in Blaue's *Atlas Novus* of 1654 appear far more detailed in its depiction of settlements and topography, the location of these sites is often far from accurate.[118] As a result, they provide little more than partial corroboration for the documentary material.

By way of contrast, Stephen MacDougall's *Map of the Island of Islay* from 1749-51 (BI:522-3) provides by far the most detailed representation of the island and its settlements of any made prior to the 19th century. Considering that Roy's military survey of 1746-55[119] did not extend to Islay, the importance of MacDougall's map in this kind of study cannot be understated. The map was commissioned along with a more general survey by Daniel Campbell of Shawfield as part of an ambitious plan to modernise agricultural practise on the Islay estate. As a result, it is not only (relatively) geographically accurate but shows the division of the island into the farm-districts listed in the local rentals. The survey was originally accompanied by a series of smaller maps showing individual farm-districts at a scale of about 1:10,000. It has been suggested by Storrie (1997:79) that these larger scale maps – which illustrate boundaries, land use, areas with potential for improvement and even the location of subsidiary settlements – may have formed the basis of MacDougall's map of the island. As only a handful have survived, however, this is

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Hearth Tax survey for 1694) and the private collections of the Campbells of Cawdor in Cawdor castle (*eg.* the Islay Rentals for 1628-32; 1641-3; and 1654).

[117] Much of the pre-modern material is now available on-line in the NLS digital map collection. See the 'Maps of Scotland, 1560-1928' section of the NLS' digital library project: http://www.nls.uk/digitallibrary/map/early/index.html (accessed 5 March 2004). This includes maps by Forlani [1558-1566]; Porcacchi 1572; Ortelius 1573; Leslie 1578; Mercator 1595; Hole 1607; Blaeu, W. 1635; Blaue, J 1654; Speed 1662; and Le Rouge 1746. The contents of the OS Object Name Book collated during the preparation of the original OS 6" map, are now also easily accessible, having been entered in the Islay Cultural Data-Base (see Chapter 7). In addition to this, http://www.old-maps.co.uk provides a fully searchable digital version of the map itself. In the 100 years since the publication of the 1st edition 6" map, various improvements have been made to OS products including metricisation and the addition of contours. OS maps of the area have also been released on a scale of 1:10,000; 1:25,000 (the Explorer series: Sheets 352 and 353); and 1:50,000 (the Landranger series: Sheet NR60). Although larger scale maps are also available (1:2,500, 1:5,000) these contain no additional place-name material relevant to this project.

[118] As Blaue was working from a list or a series of sequences of names from one of Timothy Pont's now lost texts, this is easily explained. It is occasionally possible to see where, upon coming to certain geographical locations, Blaue has introduced the relevant sequence of place-names albeit in the wrong order: *eg.* the sequence Stromnes beg, Gil, Stromnes M., Balechatchinnish, Lyrebols, Kilnachtan is introduced at Kilnaughton Bay and ends at a place where we might expect to find Gil, when in fact it should have been added the opposite way round. Other inaccuracies are harder to explain. The 'Castel of Falinghan or Finlagan' is shown in the vicinity of Loch Gurÿm [Loch Gorm] in the northern half of the Rhinns, when the famous Lordship centre at Finlaggan is actually many kilometres away in Kilmeny.

[119] Following the Jacobite uprising of 1745-6, it was decided by the British army that the key to the effective policing of the Highlands was accurate maps. In 1747, the government commissioned William Roy to produce a map of mainland Scotland. The end result of the survey was the publication in 1755 of the so-called 'Duke of Cumberland's Map'. Although this map preserves a great deal of important place-name data from the West Highlands, it does not include the islands and is therefore of little use in the study of settlement history in Islay.

difficult to say. Although the 1777 list of contents for Islay House Library records a 'Book of Maps of Islay' (BI:473), which may have been able to shed more light on the matter, it is no longer extant.[120]

Figure 9: Stephen MacDougall's 'Map of the Island of Islay' 1749-51 (BI:552-3))

[120] A great deal of cartographic material is also known to have been lost in the fire at the Shawfield Campbell mansion at Woodhall in Lanarkshire in the mid 19th century (Storrie 1997:79), with more of the collection having been 'plundered' (Ramsay 1970:50-1). This is likely to have included the map of Islay acquired by Joseph Banks on his way to Iceland in 1772, which may or may not have been the 'beautiful map of Islay' seen by Thomas Pennant in the same year. Another complete map of Islay was acquired by Arrowsmith from Robert Campbell in 1807 (Storrie 1997:81).

5.3 What's in a name? II

Before deciding which place-name material should be included in or excluded from this study, it is prudent to ask what the names recorded in Islay's early rentals actually represent.

It is evident from the late 18th century reports of MacDonald (first published in 1811), that the standard unit of settlement in early modern Islay was the 'baile' or 'township'. As McKerral (1950-1:54) points out, however, it is important not to confuse this term with the modern English noun 'town', now reserved for purely urban communities. The only conurbations on Islay approaching the modern concept of town – Bowmore in Kilarrow, Port Ellen in Kildalton and perhaps Port Charlotte in Kilchoman – date to the late 18th and early 19th centuries (RCAHMS 1984:284-7,299-300,297-8). Similarly, while the majority of names listed in Appendix I below now denote single, centralised farms and sometimes even villages – *eg.* Ballygrant, Bridgend (=Kilarrow) and Keills (=Killcallumkill) – it would be wrong to suppose that each name has only ever accounted for a single household or even a single farm in the modern understanding of these words.

Prior to the agricultural and tenurial reforms of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the basic agricultural unit in Islay, as elsewhere in the West Highlands and Islands, consisted of three elements which McKerral (1950-1:53-4) describes as follows:

1) The house or houses belonging to a man and his family and accommodating his livestock and agricultural equipment.
2) The joint arable holding in one or other of the forms of 'runrig' by a group of tenants [,] the tenants combining to supply a plough team in places where the plough was in use [and t]he members of each group [being] jointly responsible for the rent of their holding.[121]
3) A much larger area which included green pasture, hill and moss, and wood, on which the occupants of the arable holdings grazed their cattle in common. This area of pasturage might extend to a thousand acres or more, while the arable holding might not exceed in all ten to twenty acres.

The Gaelic term for this kind of community was '*baile*'. While the arable land in the typical West Highland baile was separated from the pasture by a head dyke, the bailes themselves were not usually demarcated by artificial means (McKerral 1950-1:54). As the standard leases of Islay farms from the 1770s required tenants to build proper boundary fences and straighten out the marches in the process (Caldwell 2001:77),[122] it is nevertheless likely that the estate boundaries illustrated on MacDougall's map of 1749-51 are more representative of ancient territorial divisions than those given in later sources.[123]

It is also important to note, that the houses of these communities were not generally nucleated into villages as they might have been in Lowland Scotland or England, but scattered in groups across its lands (McKerral 1950-1:54). While it was theoretically possible for a baile to be peopled by one family living in a single house surrounded by outbuildings and arable land, it is just as likely to have comprised several

[121] Although Islay's runrig economy continued in places into the 19th century (Caldwell 2001:80), it has been suggested, on the basis of excavations at An Sithean (RCAHMS 1984:123-7), that the system was a later medieval innovation. The farming methods it may have replaced, however, are as yet unclear.

[122] The first comprehensive programmes of professional, dry-stone dyke-building were begun by estate owners in the 19th century using Cumbrian and Northumbrian craftsmen (Caldwell 2001:77-9).

[123] While the Register of Sasines gives a fairly full coverage of land-holdings in Scotland from 1617, the data for Islay is limited to the names of the constituent parts of the Islay estate. Detailed descriptions of the boundaries between these different farm-districts are not given until the 19th century.

small communities farming discrete plots of arable within a shared expanse of moor and pastureland. In his *General View on the Agriculture of Bute*, Aiton (1816:54) remarks of Arran that '[t]he occupiers of land had a township of four to five to twenty families, several joint tacksmen in every farm'. The proliferation of sub-tenants in the Islay rentals of the 17th and 18th centuries point to a similar situation there. In 1733, the 1/8 holding of Craigfin in Kildalton parish, for example, was held in unequal portions by Neil Campbell, Archibald and Dougald McKenzie, Margaret Brown and Duncan Carmichael – in other words, at least four families and most probably at least four separate arable plots. To avoid confusion with the common G place-name generic *baile*, therefore, the type of holding illustrated in the early Islay rentals and on MacDougal's map will hereafter be referred to as a 'farm-district'.

Interestingly, the distinction between the Islay farm-district and its constituent (hereafter: 'subordinate') settlement units finds close parallels in the Faroese and Norwegian systems of settlement organisation. In the Faroes, the primary settlements – which went on to become tax-paying units – were known historically as *bygðir* or 'districts' (MacGregor 1986:84-101). These *bygðir* contained a greater or lesser number of subordinate settlements known as *býlingur*, 'little settlements', nucleated around the primary settlement site. While the name of any given *bygð* was likely to be unique in its region and used as a collective designation for all of the settlements in the district, *býlingur* names such as *við Á*, 'by the river', were usually only sufficient to locate the settlement within the farm district (*cf.* MacGregor 1986:86). In Norway, a similar relationship obtained between the *gård* 'estate' and the *bruk* 'subordinate agricultural unit' (*cf.* NSL:28). The main difference between the Faroes (and to a lesser extent Norway) and Islay in this respect is that subordinate settlement names in Islay are much less likely to have survived. The value of this parallel, however, is that it suggests that many more settlements and therefore settlement names may once have existed in Islay.

Although McKerral (1950-1:54) states unequivocally that: 'the small individual holdings included in the [West Highland] *baile* did not have individual place-names assigned to them', this seems extremely unlikely. Individual 'clusters' of dwellings, sometimes known as 'clachans' (Morrison 2004:110), would almost certainly have had names within the local place-name user-group, just like the Faroese *býlingur* names, even if these names were simply indicative of their current occupants – *eg.* a hypothetical 'Calum's House', or location, *eg.* 'by the stream'. In Islay, the existence of subordinate names is confirmed by the few surviving estate plans prepared for Daniel Campbell of Shawfield by Stephen MacDougall in the mid 18th century. MacDougall's map of the farm-district of Cladville, for example, on the SW extremity of the Rhinns, shows five or perhaps six separate clusters of houses. These are named as Ballameanach, Cladaville, Claddach/Portnahaivne and Duthie. A further settlement is indicated on the isle of Orsay but not named (Figure 9). Significantly, however, only two of these: Cladaville and Orsay; appear in the earlier rentals.

Although island-wide records for this kind of settlement proliferation have not survived, the situation encountered in Cladville is unlikely to have been unusual. As it was the baile as a whole which was responsible for payment of rent and other dues, it was only the name of the baile which served a fiscal function and only this name, therefore, that was preserved in written form. The local rental of 1733, for example, shows that many settlement districts were leased jointly by up to 9 tenants – but it is the names of the tenants themselves rather than those of the plots where they lived which were recorded. In general, the names of subordinate settlements only begin to appear in the documentary records of the 19th century, when new methods of accounting and standards in map-making required every settlement name to be recorded. Given that this development followed a period of rapid expansion, decline and reorganisation of settlement – during which the traditional baile system was replaced by a more modern system of nucleated farms – it seems unlikely that the 19th century data will preserve an accurate picture of settlement distribution or nomenclature in pre-modern times. On the contrary, it is likely that many of the sub-farm-district settlements from the ealier period will have disappeared along with their names without ever having appeared in the documentary sources or become elevated to an onomastic status they did not previously posses.

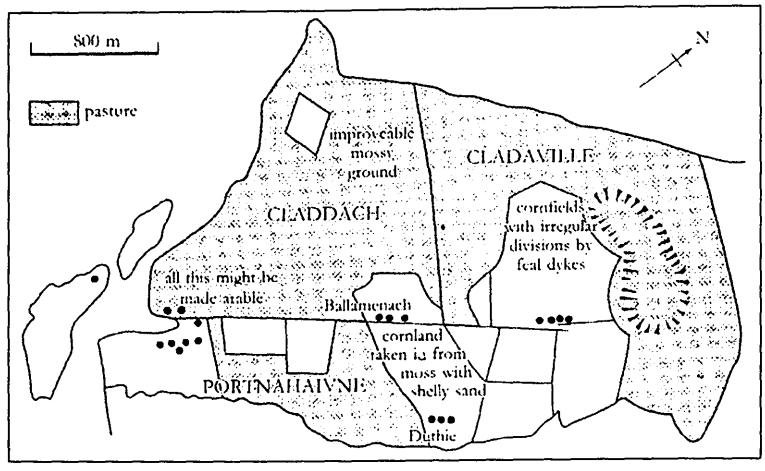

Figure 10: MacDougall's map of 'Cladaville' (Storrie 1997:80)

5.4 Towards a research model

The realisation that many Islay settlement-names are ultimately Norse in origin is not new. It was first recognised in print towards the end of the 18th century by Welsh traveller Thomas Pennant. In his *Tour in Scotland and Voyage to the Hebrides 1772*, Pennant (1998:220-1) observed that:

> [t]here are more Danish or Norwegian names of places in this island than any other; almost all the present farms derive their titles from them, such as Persibus, Torridale, Torribolse and the like.

While this particular assessment must be seen as an exaggeration, subsequent references to the 'Norwegian' or 'Danish' place-names of Islay were somewhat less hyperbolic. In his account to John Sinclair, the Rev. Archibald Robertson, the minister of Kildalton Parish, noted the prevalence of 'Danish' names (those ending 'bus') in the Oa (Sinclair 1983:402); J.J.A. Worsaae (1852:277-8) wrote briefly on Scandinavian names of places and Cosmo Innes (1854:268) observed that the names Laxay and Skipa were both from Norse. It was not for another 100 years, however, and the endeavours of *PSAS* regular Captain W.F.L. Thomas, that first – and until now only – systemtic study of Islay place-names was carried out.

By this point, Thomas had already been actively engaged in the question of whether the Norse 'extirpated' the Celtic inhabitants of the Hebrides for the best part of two decades. In his 1874-6 survey of the farm-names of Lewis, for example, he had concluded not only that '[r]ejecting the English names [...] the Scandinavian names are nearly four times more numerous than the Gaelic' (p.503), but that the remaining Gaelic names were the result of post-Viking Age re-introduction (p.503). In his 1881-2 article 'On Islay Place-Names' he turned his attentions to the Inner Hebrides and Islay. Of the 162 non-English place-names featured in this study, Thomas (1881-2:273) regarded approximately one third to be Norse and two thirds Gaelic.

Parish	Entries	Norse	Gaelic
Kildalton	46	15	31
Killarow	73	23	50
Kilchoman	43	17	26
Totals	162	55	107

Figure 11: Thomas' (1881-2:273) classification of Islay's non-English farm-names

While Thomas considered this ratio to be the result of 'many causes' (1881-2:273), he chose not discuss these other than by pointing to the conclusions of his 1874-6 article (1881-2:273-6 & 1874-6:503-7). Given that this focused almost exclusively on the Outer Hebrides and Skye, however, it is difficult to see how they can be applied to the Inner Hebrides in general or Islay in particular without substantial qualification. Although he does tell us that: 'the Scandinavian element, when compared with the Gaelic, is eight times stronger in Lewis than in Islay', this is clearly inaccurate. Working with Thomas' own figures: if 80% of the non-English farm-names in Lewis are Norse, compared with 33% in Islay, this makes the 'Scandinavian element' of Lewis farm-names just over twice that of Islay, not eight times and not, therefore, such a huge difference after all. But despite or perhaps even because of this statistical hyperbole Thomas' ratios have found their way to the very heart of the traditional understanding of Norse settlement in the Hebrides – *ie.* while the Outer Hebrides became more or less completely Norse, the Inner Hebrides remained a centre of Gaelic language and culture throughout the Viking Age. Indeed, in the hundred and twenty years since, these ratios have become such an integral part of Scotland's Viking Age 'factology' that they are often quoted without reference to their source (*eg.* Bremner 1904:373; MacBain 1922:70; Oftedal 1961:117).

If we do as Thomas himself admonishes, however, and look behind his published findings to the notes he deposited in the library of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in Edinburgh, it is readily apparent that neither his choice of source material nor his analytical approach lend credence to this kind of pronouncement on Islay's early medieval history.

To begin with, the data used by Thomas in his survey makes no allowances for the island's turbulent political history; the various waves of potentially name-giving land-owners, tacksmen and even farm-

workers who have arrived from Ireland, Argyll and the Scottish 'mainland' since the later Middle Ages; or the revolution in agricultural practise that transformed its settlement organisation and nomenclature in the late 18th and early 19th centuries (Chapter 7). Ironically, as it is almost entirely limited to the names of farms listed as 'going concerns' in the then current (1872-3) Valuation Roll for the County of Argyllshire, it actually excludes the large number of farm-names known from earlier sources and contemporary local usage alike which no longer denoted tax-paying concerns. Conversely, however, it includes a number of Gaelic settlement names which do not appear in earlier sources. Some of these, like Bowmore, have clearly documented origins in the late 18th century.[124] In addition to this, Thomas' list includes a small selection of nature and district names mentioned in the Valuation Roll. Although there are only 6 of these, this figure represents around 4% of the total number of names in his study.[125] As all of them appear to be Gaelic or English and none refer to taxable farms in 1872-3 their inclusion can only serve to distort his eventual ratio. In a footnote to his findings, Thomas does tell us that 'Mr. Dougall's (*sic.*) Map of Islay contains 40 Place-Names which are not in the Valuation Roll, of these 25 are Gaelic and 15 are Norse' (1881-2:273 FN1). But as he does not list the names in question – either in his *PSAS* article or in MS – it is impossible to know whether they include any of the 65 non-settlement names shown on MacDougall's map. Neglecting to mention that almost 30 of the names in his own list do not appear on MacDougall's map confuses matters yet further.

As a pioneer in the field of place-name studies, Thomas was, moreover, unaware of the *ex-nomine* onomastic unit and its significance in the study of Norse settlement (Chapter 4). While he does make provision for a limited number of loaned Norse personal-names in Gaelic place-names,[126] his simple classification of non-English place-names as either Norse or Gaelic serves only to give a general indication of the minimum extent of Norse settlement and does not allow for the more nuanced study of ethnic development. If Thomas' study shows anything therefore, it is, with a few qualifications, the ratio of tax-paying farms with Norse and Gaelic names in Islay in the second half of the nineteenth century. But how else, then, should the issue of Norse settlement be approached?

Most recent studies of Hebridean material have drawn on Nicolaisen's technique of extracting settlement names with habitative generics from a given scale of OS map (*cf.* Alcock & Alcock 1980; Nieke 1983, 1984; Jennings 1993). Despite the basic problems with this approach – outlined in Chapter 4 above – one might imagine that expansion to include settlements with topographic generics would give more satisfactory coverage of settlement types while at the same time providing an easily accessible and easily manageable body of data. But even this would make little allowance for the radical changes in settlement organisation which are known to have taken place since the mid 18th century.

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[124] The planned village of Bowmore was founded in 1768 by Daniel Campbell of Shawfield, then laird of Islay (RCAHMS 1984:284-287). There is no record of settlement at 'Bowmore' before this point.

[125] These are: Oa, Rhuvaal, McArthur's Head, Beinn na Gaillich, the Rhinns and Lochindaal.

[126] In his discussion of 'Baleole', for example, Thomas (MS) notes that 'Norse proper names continued in use after Gaelic had become the common speech'.

A further refinement, as outlined by Anne Johnston in her 1990 study of the Mull group of islands, would be to include 'all settlements mentioned in the sources, whether physically discernable or not and regardless of the origin of the settlement name' (Johnston 1990:22). Given the peculiarities of the Islay material, however, the resultant patchwork of chronologically and typologically diverse sources would undoubtedly create more problems than it solved in terms of anachronisms and imbalance in the consistency and usefulness of data.

In order to minimise the impact of these problems, it is important that the framework is based on evidence pre-dating the agrarian reforms of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. It is also important that it provides complete, contemporary coverage of the island on a settlement-typologically uniform basis – it would distort analysis enormously if data from one period where information was only available on farm-districts was assessed alongside that from another where data was available for individual shielings *etc.* Finally, it should be possible to the gauge geo-spatial characteristics for the vast majority, if not all, of the settlement units involved.

If we are to use place-names to help reconstruct the settlement patterns and ethnic identities of 1000 plus years ago, our first recourse should not therefore be to the local council's rate books but the oldest surviving records of local place-names. Ideally, these would be contemporary with the period being studied. As the vast majority of evidence for Islay place-names post-dates the end of the Norse period by several hundred years, however, this is not possible. While the approach must therefore be retrospective, the risk of anachronism can be minimised by working with the earliest possible material.

Unfortunately, the earlier sources cover no more than a small part of the island in anything other than superficial detail. It was this lack of early detail that prompted Nieke (1984) and Swift (1987) to turn to the so-called MacIan Extent of 1507 in their studies of settlement distribution on the island. Both seemed to assume, presumably following Lamont (1957, 1958), that this list of 'fermes' and their 'extents' was the earliest comprehensive guide to settlement distribution in Islay.

On first examination such an assumption appears reasonable. MacIan's 'rental' can certainly be regarded as comprehensive in the sense that it accounts for the fiscal 'extent' of the entire island. However, when the distribution of its holdings is studied more closely, it soon becomes clear that it does not cover every part of Islay at the level of the individual farm-district. Whereas 'Oo of Islay', for example, is listed as a single holding with an 'extent' of £13 4s 8d, it is clear from other sources, both earlier and later, that this holding was split into at least 10 individual farm-districts and probably many more subordinate settlements. Similarly, other large holdings, such as Larg at £13 6s 8d and Chantor alias Kinror at £6 13s and 4d dominate Kildalton proper, when this are also known to have proliferated in smaller farm-districts.

There are even more problems with the next potential starting point – the extract from the 1541 rental of the Lordship of the Isles covering Islay. Although this rental includes 144 different farm-names – which

might seem fairly comprehensive – it excludes a large number of holdings, mostly from the parish of Kilarrow and Kilmeny and amounting to *c.* 10% of the total, which are known from both earlier and later sources. While the absence of 'Church Lands' listed in previous rentals accounts for many of these 'missing' holdings, the exclusion of other, secular farm-districts is puzzling. Unusually for a rental of this period, the 1541 document also lists the tenants of each holding. According to Caldwell (forthcoming), this most likely represents an attempt by James V (who purchased the MacIan inheritance earlier in that year) to set the lands directly to sitting tenants and wean them away from allegiance to their clan chiefs – either the MacDonalds of Dunyvaig or the MacLeans of Duart. By so doing, the Crown might have hoped to further destabilise the by then disenfranchised MacDonald Lords of the Isles and the missing holdings seen as pockets of support for the Lordship or perhaps demesne holdings – presumably in the hands of the MacDonalds and the MacLeans. Whatever the case, the incomplete nature of the 1541 rental limits its value as a starting point for any study of the island as a whole.

While later rentals, and especially those of the early 18th century, are far more likely to be 'complete', their purely tabular format means there is no way of knowing whether they include every farm-district on the island. It is not until 1749-51 and the mutual corroboration of Stephen MacDougall's surveys and map that full coverage of the island is more or less guaranteed. As we have already seen, MacDougall's map is not the earliest to provide detailed coverage of Islay, but it is the first to illustrate the comprehensive division of the island into individual farm-districts. While it may not indicate the location of every settlement-name known from earlier sources, those that it does show can be regarded as the most important in any given area. Moreover, as it dates to the period immediately prior to Islay's agrarian revolution, the distribution of names it preserves is far more likely to reflect medieval settlement patterns and socio-economic connexions than maps from even 50 years later.

5.5 Basic research model

The basic framework of this study will therefore be provided by the farm-names and boundaries shown on MacDougall's map. These names will first of all be analysed to establish their source language and etymology. Enough suitable external data will then be gathered to create a socio-economic profile for each of the associated settlement areas showing how they relate to the landscape and to each other and giving a basic idea of the wider semantic connotations of the relevant place-name generics. The analysis of this data will be presented in Chapters 7 and 8.

Unlike most previous studies, use will also be made of nature-names. These will not, however, be used as chronological markers, but rather as an indication of the geographical extent and nature of the ON place-name user group. Ideally, this would involve a comprehensive survey of every topographic name on the island. Once again, however, restraints on time, but also suitable source material preclude such an extensive study. Despite the proliferation of early charters, rentals and maps, there are very few references to Islay's topographic features (see above). As a result, the majority of its nature names cannot be traced any further back than the original Ordnance Survey 6 inch to the mile map from 1878. For ease

of assessment, therefore, efforts will be concentrated on names shown on the OS 1:25,000 scale series which might reasonably be interpreted as Norse (see below). Given the known impact of ON loan-words on G maritime nomenclature (*cf.* Stewart 2004:408-17), this search will be restricted to on-shore names unless the names of off-shore features are of direct relevance to adjacent on-shore names. While this categorisation in itself will be subjective, the method by which these names will be analysed will be the same as that used for settlement names.

CHAPTER 6: METHODOLOGY

6.1 Introduction

While the place-names of Islay have already received varying degrees of attention, recent etymological work has been limited to either individual generics or specific parts of the island – *eg.* Gammeltoft's 2002 treatment of ON *bólstaðr* (see also Cox 1994:43-76) and Olson's 1983 studies of the southern part of the Rhinns (pp.134-167) and the south-eastern part of the Oa (pp.168-176). Although there have also been three more comprehensive surveys – by Thomas (1881-1882:241-76, MS), Gillies (1906:144-59, 7-21, 187-251) and Maceacherna (1976) – it was felt that some of the conclusions reached therein might have benefited from a slightly more rigorous methodology. The following chapter will address the practical approach to place-name studies adopted here, explaining which types of linguistic and extra linguistic data have been gathered, why and how these have been interpreted.

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The basic etymological technique employed here will follow the approach originally set out by Rygh in NG (Indl:24-8), refined by Christensen and Kousgård Sørensen in SNF (119-60) and presented as the 'comparative historical philological model' by Sandnes in her 2003 study of Norse place-name development in Orkney (2003:109-11).

There are three main steps in this process. The body of linguistic evidence for the name (written and oral) is first of all scrutinised to establish the etymological possibilities – with suggestions based on the normalised spellings, morphological conventions and accepted meanings familiar from standard reference works (SNF:120-36). In the case of suspected Norse names these were: CVC, Zoëga and Iversen, with initial treatment of the suspected Gaelic material being based on: Dwelly, MacBain, DIL and Thurneysen. It was also felt important, however, that the current study should not be limited to standard dictionaries. As Pálsson (1996:11) points out, there are several ON nouns which are well established in Hebridean nomenclature but not used in medieval texts: *eg.* **rip* (f) 'crag', as in Loch Ribevat in Lewis, and **vöttr* (m) 'glove', as in Icelandic Vattarnes or Norwegian Vattedal. To cover this eventuality, use was also made of place-name glossaries, such as that in Rygh's (1898:41-88) introduction to *Norske Gaardnavne* (hereafter Indl). It must be stressed once again, therefore, that all of the etymologies suggested here are reconstructions based on normalised spellings which might differ from the actual original forms.[127] Thus an interpretation of ON **Fjall* ('hill, mountain'), for example, might in reality belie an original form closer to **Fell*, **Fjell*, **Föll etc.*

[127] In view of the extremely conservative nature of the G onomastic language, it is usually felt sufficient to base reconstructions on modern G spelling. This convention will be followed here. See 'General Introduction'.

When the name and its meaning are not self-evident, these possibilities are then checked against name-typological norms to find the most likely alternative(s) (SNF:136-46). Cognates for the ON material were sought primarily in Norway (NG; NR; NSL), the Faroes' northern isles (Matras 1933), Shetland (Jakobsen 1936), Orkney (Marwick 1952), Lewis (Oftedal 1954:363-409) and Iceland (Jónsson 1907-15:412-58; Kristjánsson 1907-15:917-37; Bandle 1977:47-68). Where G/Ir cognates were required, the main sources of reference were Joyce (1902; 1920; 1922), Hogan (1910) and Ó Fogluda (nd).[128]

The final step in this process is the so-called 'test against reality' to check if the proposed etymology is appropriate in the given context(s) (SNF:146-62; Sandnes 2003:110).

These three steps are of decreasing importance. Although the first is a prerequisite for analysis, the next two need only be employed if the result of the first step is not considered unambiguous (SNF:119). The third can nevertheless be decisive when more than one possibility is presented by the first (SNF:119). Without a detailed knowledge of local topography, it might be assumed, for example, that the generic element in *Torsay, in Kilchoman, was ON *á* 'river'. The conspicuous absence of rivers from this area, however, points instead to ON *staðir* 'farm/ steading' (see notes on Coultorsay in Appendix I). Similarly, while the specific element in Kinnabus in Kilarrow was previously interpreted as ON **Kinnarbólstaðr* '[the] farm by the cheek of land (= high cliffs)', the lack of any suitable features within a substantial radius makes this highly unlikely (see below and Appendix I).

6.2 The collection of data

6.2.1 Early forms

As the main aim of etymological research is to establish the original form and appellative usage of a given name, this kind of exercise would, ideally, be based on a knowledge of the name's form and the motivation of the name-giver(s) at the time of coinage. As this information is rarely available,[129] analysis must therefore be retrospective and to a certain degree speculative in nature. The level of speculation can be reduced, however, by basing analysis on the earliest recorded forms of the name (*cf.* Indl:24-8). A list of the sources consulted for this purpose can be found in the References section below. While it is not exhaustive, it does cover every major and many lesser sources of Islay place-names between the Papal Bull of 1203 and MacDougall's map of 1749-51. For ease of collection and collation of data, the basic material (*ie.* the settlement names shown on MacDougall's map) was divided into 4 sections, one for each of the 4 parishes shown in MacDougall's *c.* 1749 survey.[130] This, along with all other relevant data, is presented in Appendices I, II and III below.

[128] While the use of secondary material in this kind of corroborative role might seem circular, it should be noted that etymologies from the more northerly parts of the Norse world; and Ireland are based on a vast amount of data from a far more stable linguistic background.

[129] Two obvious exceptions here, are the place-names Port Ellen and Port Charlotte. See Chapter 4 above.

[130] For the purposes of this exercise, the boundaries between the parishes were those indicated by the groupings in MacDougall's survey of *c.*1749. The history of these divisions will be discussed in more detail in chapter 8.

6.2.2 Local pronunciation

Given the centuries long delay between the coining and recording of Islay's Norse names, the notorious inconsistencies of medieval and early Modern spelling and the natural tendency of scribes from any period towards hyper-correction, corroboration for the early forms has been sought in the local pronunciation. While the importance of local pronunciation in this respect has long since been recognised in Norway[131] and increasingly so in Scotland,[132] it is not often recorded by analysts of Inner Hebridean material. With the exception of a few sporadic examples (*eg.* Cox 1994), it is virtually never presented in studies of the Islay nomenclature. In order to gather enough accurate data to address steps 1 and 3 of the etymological process, it was therefore necessary to make several field trips to Islay. In total, 4 visits were made between June 2003 and May 2004 lasting for a total of four weeks. Impressions on local topography, which are presented in Appendix I below, were gleaned on all four occasions. Local pronunciations, however, were gathered in May 2004.

6.2.2.1 The collection of local pronunciation

Suitable informants were identified in advance with the help of knowledgeable locals on the basis of long-standing familiarity with the oral forms of local place-names. While three of the eventual interviewees were not native to Islay, their inclusion in this survey was justified by their length of residence on the island (40+ years) and their equally long-standing marriages to local people. Also, as it was hoped that a high mean age would better reflect genuine oral tradition, maturity was preferred to youth wherever possible. In total, there were 14 participants; 6 male and 8 female. Although the youngest was 39 and the oldest 85, the mean age of all participants was slightly under 70 (see References).

While the majority of interviews took place in the participants' homes, a number were also held in the Museum of Islay Life in Port Charlotte and the office of the Islay Family History Society in Islay House Square, Bridgend. All of them followed the same standard pattern. The participants were told in advance that the aim of the survey was to record the pronunciation of various local place-names, some of which would be farm-names and others river- and hill-names *etc.* They were not, however, informed of the study's medieval or Norse dimensions. Ideally, the interviews would then have been carried out in Gaelic using blank maps and non-leading questioning to specify locations. For practical reasons, however, this was not possible. As neither the author nor all of the participants were fluent Gaelic speakers, the medium of communication was English. Although the importance of the local Gaelic pronunciation was stressed, there is a possibility, therefore, that some of the names were given 'Englished' pronunciations. Similarly, given constraints on time and the large area being covered, it was necessary to supply the interviewees with written lists of place-names. While it is possible that some of the spoken forms were influenced by these lists, steps were taken to minimise contamination of the oral data by 'spelling pronunciation'.[133]

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[131] According to Rygh (Indl:4) 'pronunciation amongst locals often preserves the ancient forms, although this is usually subject to the same sound changes that have affected the rest of the language' (my transl).

[132] *cf.* Jakobsen 1936; Oftedal 1954; Stahl 1999; Cox 2002 *etc.*

[133] *ie.* simply reading the letters from the page as one might any other word material instead of seeing the written version as an abstraction of the actual and potentially very different phonological form of the place-name.

In all but one case, which was used as a control, the lists were limited to areas in which the participants had been raised or spent a substantial part of their adult lives. They were then asked to read through the place-names in the lists with a view to doing two things:

a) declaiming those names they knew through word of mouth in the form with which they were familiar

b) indicating those names with which they were not familiar or knew only from having read about.

Before proceeding, it was once again stressed that this was not a test, that there was no right or wrong way to pronounce these names and that what was being sought was the form of the names as known to the interviewees themselves. In order to check whether these instructions were followed, five 'decoy' names, formed from common local place-name elements, were inserted at random into each list. As only two of the participants failed to indicate a lack of familiarity with any of these 'decoy' names, it was assumed that they were. Moreover, as the pronunciation given by the control for names recognised differed in several instances to that given by more local speakers, it can be assumed that most, if not all, pronunciations are a genuine reflection of oral tradition. When all of the interviews were completed and the data collated, it was found that the number of informants and the spread of their knowledge had been great enough to cover almost all of the names in all four lists.

6.2.2.2 Transcription and Islay Gaelic

Where consent was given, interviews were recorded onto mini-disc and later transferred to PC for ease of analysis. Otherwise more traditional notes were taken using pen and paper. The Duolos SIL IPA93 font was then used to transcribe the data into the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA),[134] with notations being presented in square brackets after the modern forms of the place-names given in Appendix I.

During the process of transcription, attention was paid to the general conventions on G phonetics set out on: http://www.omniglot.com/writing/gaelic.htm and http://www.akerbeltz.org/fuaimean/fuaimean.htm (both accessed on 4 May 2004). However, note was also taken of the models proposed for Barra Gaelic by Stahl (1999:86-9 & 92-302) and Lewis Gaelic by Cox (2002:143-4 & 145-390).[135]

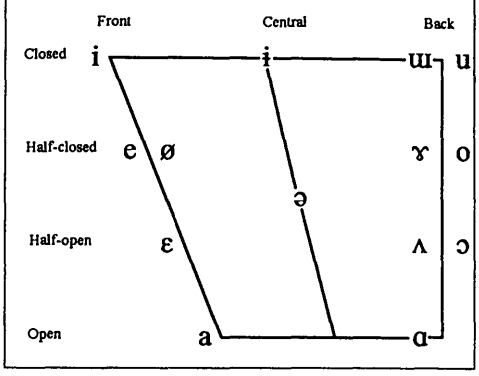
The keen observer will nevertheless notice a number of apparent inconsistencies in the transcription of certain phonological elements in this *corpus*, both internally and when compared to standard realisations of Scottish Gaelic. Attention could be drawn here to the idiosyncrasies of Islay Gaelic (*cf.* Grannd 2000). It should be noted that even in the relatively limited geographical confines of Islay, pronunciation is not uniform and varies over surprisingly small distances. It was remarked by several informants that pronunciation in Portnahaven, for example, is noticeably different from that in Port Charlotte less than 12 kilometres away. Even so, it must be stressed that the aim of this exercise was not to create a normalised phonology for Islay dialects but rather to capture the phonology of each individual place-name as it

[134] The Duolos SIL fonts package used in the phonetic transcriptions in this thesis is © SIL International Publishing Services, Texas, USA. It was downloaded from http://www.sil.org on 4 May 2004.

[135] Both Stahl and Cox draw heavily on Borgstrøm's (1937, 1940) system for Barra Gaelic and Oftedal's (1956) system for Lewis Gaelic.

existed *in situ*. The rationale behind this approach is that local pronunciation might preserve 'ancient' forms of place-names long-since obscured by learned, colloquial or accidental emendation of spelling.

VOWELS The phonemes [ø], [u], [o] and [ɒ] are rounded. With the exception of the central schwa [ə], the remainder are unrounded.



SUPRASEGMENTALS (Half-long vowels are not marked)

ˈ	Primary Stress	ˈkʰaːrəˌt̪us
ˌ	Secondary Stress	
ː	Long	ˈbaːr
˘	Extra-short	ˈkʰahtəˌɖχɬ
.	Syllable break (with no glottal catch)	ˈja?la.t̪us

DIACRITICS

d̥	Voiceless
tʰ	Aspirated (Pre-aspiration is represented by [h])
kʲ	Palatalised
ã	Nasalised
ɬ	Velarized

CONSONANTS (Ejectives are represented p' t' k' s')

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d		ʈ	c	k g	q	ʔ
Nasal	m			n		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ		
Trill				r						
Tap or Flap				ɾ						
Fricative		f v		s	ʃ		ç ʝ	x ɣ		h
Lateral Fricative										
Approximant		ʋ					j	ɰ		
Lateral Approximant				l			ʎ			

Figure 12: Explanation of phonetic symbols

6.3 Norse or Gaelic?

When it comes to Islay place-names, by far the most interesting and often the most challenging aspect of the etymological process is deciding whether a given onomastic unit was originally Norse or Gaelic. When attempting to identify Norse elements in particular, it must be remembered that we are dealing with the transfer and survival of place-name material from a Scandinavian language background in an alien

phonological environment.[136] We must therefore expect that material to have undergone a certain amount of phonological adaptation.

6.3.1 Gaelic phonology

It was with this problem in mind that Watson (1904:lvii-lx) and later Henderson (1910:342-57) devised a series of paradigms whereby gaelicised Norse place-name material might be regressed into its likely ON guise. According to Henderson (1910:343), for example, ON /k/ is often represented by G /g/ in medial, terminal and more rarely initial positions. As Oftedal (1954:366-7) points out, however, these paradigms do not necessarily reflect the sound changes which might have taken place on the transfer of phonological sequences (*eg.* words, names *etc.*) from Norse into Gaelic but rather the apparent orthographic transformation from the reconstructed spelling of the suspected ON original to the normalised, modern G spelling of the same name. Depending on who was responsible for the transcription of the names, therefore, and how much the written norms varied from the local pronunciation, the apparent changes could be misleading or even disguise important intermediate stages in the process of phonological transformation. One hidden danger in the reconstruction of ON forms is the shortening of polysyllabic ON names to three syllables (Cox 2002:67). In the absence of a more rigorous diachronic study of Islay phonology, the student of its Norse place-names would nevertheless be unwise to ignore these paradigms. Providing they are not regarded as sacrosanct or exhaustive and that more appropriate linguistic research is consulted where possible,[137] there is no reason why they should not be taken alongside the more general sketches of Gillies (1906), MacBain (1922) and others as guides to the likely evolution of Islay's Norse nomenclature.

6.3.2 The effects of Gaelic grammar on Old Norse phonology

In addition to the initial and ongoing phonological transformations which would have followed the adaptation of Norse place-name material into the Gaelic sound-system we can also expect it to have undergone further changes as a direct result of the operation of Gaelic grammar. As the somewhat erratic coverage of this topic by early writers has been systematised by Borgstrøm (1940), Oftedal (1956) and more recently Cox (2002:51-62), it will suffice to summarise the most conspicuous phenomena here.

6.3.2.1 Consonant mutation

Perhaps the most readily apparent of these changes is the lenition or softening of certain initial consonants referred to in Gaelic grammar texts as 'aspiration' (*cf.* Stewart 2004:405). Aspiration takes place in several different contexts (*cf.* Borgstrøm 1940:§80,84; Oftedal 1956:164-9; Thurneysen 1975:74-89, 140-6; Cox 2002:51-3), most notably in 'nouns constituting the second element in a grammatical compound' (*cf.* Cox 2002:51) – *eg.* the specific element in a typical G place-name (see below). This has significant implications for Norse names passing into a Gaelic language environment. In the case of ON *ex nomine*

[136] See, for example, Iversen (1973:3-39).
[137] A more scientifically rigorous survey of phonetic phenomena, albeit with regards to the Gaelic of Lewis, is provided by Cox (2002:63-6).

onomastic units in dependent G names, it can result in the transformation of an initial [m] or [b] to [v]. Thus Dùn Bhoraraig, where the specific element is most likely derived from ON **Borga(r)vík* 'Fort(s) Bay', is pronounced [ˌd̥u:n ˈvɔ.raʔrig̊ʲ], with the initial [b] being lenited to [v].

Conversely, where the initial consonant in ON loan words or names corresponds to a lenited consonant in Gaelic, there is a possibility that these will have been restored or back-formed to appropriate radical forms (Cox 2002:53). Perhaps the most conspicuous reflex of this phenomenon is the back-formation of initial ON /h/, to Gaelic /t/. Thus ON **Há(va)land* 'high farm' might become G Tallant or ON **Há(va)nessker* 'High-ness Skerry' might become (Eilean an) Tannais-sgeir (see notes on Coull in Kilchoman in Appendix I).

There is also the possibility that the evolution of an onomastic unit into a 'pure proprium' and the subsequent loss of lexical meaning (see above) will have resulted in the misinterpretation of its original initial phoneme on transcription. As both [m] and [b] lenite to [v], [v] could then be back formed to either [m] or [b]. Similarly, as both [d̥] and [g̊] lenite to [ɣ], [ɣ] could be back formed to both [d̥] and [g̊]. Thus, while it is possible that the place-name Àiridh Ghutharaidh [ˌa.ri ˈɣu:ʔa.ri], for example, contains the loaned ON personal name Guðrøðr, it might actually derive from an effectively tautological G **Àirigh Dhubhàirigh* 'the shieling of **Dubh Àirigh* ('Black shieling')' (see notes on Àiridh Ghutharaidh in Kilmeny in Appendix I).

Another common form of mutation is the 'slenderisation' of certain consonants generally brought about by contact with a so-called 'slender' or front vowel. Although the phonological distinction between the resultant slender and broad consonants can be difficult to gauge, the development of /d/, /t/ and /s/ [d̥, t, s] > [dʲ, tʲ, ʃ] is highly conspicuous. Because of the general rule 'broad with broad, slender with slender', the presence of a slenderised /s/ in a word of presumed ON origin might therefore be taken to point to earlier contact with a slender vowel, even when none are now present. In the terminal onomastic unit in Glen Osamail [ˌg̊leun ˈoʃəmæl], for example, we have a slenderised /s/, but to judge from the spelling, without the prerequisite slender vowels. While this could be seen as an anomaly, it could also be explained by an origin in ON **Es̲i̲ufjall*, where the flanking vowel sounds are both slender (see notes on Kilchoman in Kilchoman in Appendix I).

6.3.3 Norse diagnostics

While the characteristic aspects of the ON language are set out at length in numerous dictionaries, grammars and scholarly articles (see above), there are certain aspects of ON onomastic grammar and vocabulary which bear repetition here.

6.3.3.1 The formation of compound place-names

When a place-name can only with difficulty be interpreted as Gaelic, the presence of a medial /s/ or [s] may indicate Norse origins. As /s/ is a relatively common genitive morpheme in ON, it can also help to identify the boundary between the specific and generic elements in the name. Thus *Tannais-sgeir, from Eilean an Tannais-sgeir in Kilchoman, may derive from ON **Hánesker* 'High-ness Skerry'. This does not mean, however, that only place-names with a clear medial /s/ can be regarded as Norse. In contrast to the modern mainland Scandinavian languages, ON boasts a number of genitive morphemes. Depending on grammatical gender, declension and number, the possessive is represented by /-s/, /-a/, /-ar/, /-u/, /-ar/, /-a/ or /-na/ (with or without j insertion or mutation of the root vowel): in masculine personal names, for example, *Gisli* > *Gisla*, *Steinn* > *Steins*, *Sigurðr* > *Sigurðar*; in feminine personal names, *Gróa* > *Gróu*, *Auðr* > *Auðar*; in the case of *steinar* (m pl.) 'stones', the genitive would be *steina* (*cf.* Iversen 1974:44-70 for further examples).

This does not mean, however, that we should expect every compound Norse place-name to contain a genitive morpheme. To do so would be to confuse standard and onomastic grammar (*cf.* Indl:17-20; NSL:180-2; Stemshaug 1985:54-6 *etc.*). While studies of the place-name material in LNB have shown that virtually every place-name with a personal name as the specific is compounded with a genitive morpheme (Stemshaug 1985:55), this phenomenon is otherwise far from universal. According to Stemshaug (1985:54), around 80% of all compound place-names in Norway today appear to have been formed without the addition of a compositional allomorph. As the creation of compounds in this manner can lead to an uncomfortable clustering of consonants, it is often followed by the insertion of a svarabhakti vowel (*cf.* Borgstrøm 1940:211-14). While this might give the appearance of a medial, genitive allomorph, the resultant vowel sound, following its adaptation into Gaelic and subsequent orthographic realisation, could be substantially different to that we might expect from the strict application of normalised literary grammar. It follows that neither the absence of a grammatically correct genitive allomorph nor indeed the presence of an apparently inaccurate one necessarily precludes Norse origins.

Interestingly, while there are numerous Norwegian place-names where the specific is a personal name without a genitive case ending, this is thought to be a recent development dating to the last several hundred years (*cf.* Stemshaug 1985:55). Thus the formally secondary G Rhubha Thòrrnish [ˌruːˑə. ˈhɔːrə̆ˌniʃ] in Kildalton is perhaps less likely to derive from an earlier ON **Þórsnes* 'the headland of Thor (the thunder god)' with its medial genitive /s/ than ON **Þorn(a)nes* 'Thorny Headland' (See notes on Ardilistry in Kildalton in Appendix I).

Care must also be taken that an apparent genitive /s/ is not in fact the first phoneme of an ON generic element. Although Duisker [ˈd̥uːɪskɪr] in Kilmeny, for example, might appear to derive from ON

Dýsgarðr 'Muck farm' (*cf.* Thomas MS), systematic analysis as outlined above points instead to ON **Dúfusker* 'Rock-dove Rock' or perhaps **Dysjasker* 'Cairn Rock' (Appendix I).

6.3.3.2 Number and case

While the majority of Norse place-names are singular (Stemshaug 1985:51; Indl:10-11), there are some examples where single sites are denoted by plural forms – such as the common habitative generic *staðir* (m.pl.) 'steading/ farm' (Stemshaug 1985:102). Depending on the type of generic and context, this might be a reflection on the topographical realities of a site, *eg.* Holtar, lit. 'hills', denoting a site dominated by hills; or possibly, as may originally have been the case with *staðir*, of the (former) existence of several cultivated centres within one farm-district (*cf.* Stemshaug 1985:51,102).

As Nicolaisen (1969:10) has pointed out, the use of the plural ON *–staðir* in Scotland's Norse nomenclature is attested both by Hebridean pronunciation and the written form of many Orcadian examples. As these tend to survive as *–ston*, probably through conflation with Scots English *–ton* < *tūn*, it might also be supposed that the colloquial form was *–stöðum*, *ie.* the dative plural. Indeed, contrary to the assumptions of early writers, we might expect most, if not all, of the surviving ON place-names in Islay to have been preserved in oblique rather than nominal forms. While this might occasionally mean accusative, which would be introduced by prepositions such as *við*, 'by, beside', in everyday discussion: *eg. við Ána* 'by the river'; the evidence from Norway suggests that the most commonly heard form in everyday speech would have been dative (Indl:14-15 Stemshaug 1985:52-3 & 56-7), as might have been introduced by the prepositions *á* 'on', *hjá* 'beside', *í* 'in', *undir* 'under' *etc.* For ease of reference, however, the reconstructions presented in Appendix I will appear in nominative and not oblique form.

6.3.4 General notes on interpretation

While the points listed above provide a certain amount of guidance with regards to the interpretation of Islay's place-name material, the process is nevertheless fraught with difficulties. Simplex names can be particularly difficult to identify as either G or ON. Take, for example, the farm-district of Leek [ˈʎiːxkʲ / ˈliːxkʲ] in the former Kilmeny parish. While this might reasonably be interpreted as G **Leac* 'flat rock/ (grave)slab', there is also a possibility that it reflects an earlier ON **Lækr* 'stream'. Unfortunately, the topographic circumstances which could have helped to clarify the origins of this name, *ie.* the presence of flat stones, a graveyard or a stream are ambiguous. With single element material, there is also the possibility that what might elsewhere be interpreted as an Norse name, is in fact an Norse word which had been borrowed into Gaelic before being utilised as place-name material. Without further data, the farm-district Gearach in Kilchoman, for example, might be seen as G **Geàrraidh* 'green pasture about a township', as opposed to ON **Gerði* 'an enclosed plot of land'. Although it is impossible to say for certain whether the name is ON or G, the fact that G *geàrraidh* is derived from ON *gerði* does mean it is highly unlikely to pre-date the Norse period.

In addition to the range of potential changes brought about by G phonology and grammar, there is also a possibility that some ON place-name material has been consciously altered by speakers of Gaelic. This process might involve the partial or complete translation of a name. Thus it might be possible, for example, that the (subordinate) settlement of *Bun Abhainne*, 'River mouth', at the SW tip of the Rhinns derives from ON **Árόss*, 'River mouth' – now preserved only in the adjacent island of Orsay, ON **Árόssey* 'River mouth island' (see notes on Orsay in Kilchoman). Similarly, the are grounds to suspect that the hill-name Got-bheinn is a part-translation of ON **Geitfjall*, 'Goat Fell' (see notes on Kilchiaran in Kilchoman).

Alternatively, or in addition to this, the process of gaelicisation might involve the folk etymological adaptation of ON phonological patterns to fit G vocabulary and onomastic structure (*cf.* Cox 2002:48). While the hill-name Beinn Tart a'Mhill (see notes on Kelsa in Kilchoman), for example, might be seen as a perplexing G 'Hill of the Thirsty hill', it is perhaps more likely to derive from G adaptation of an earlier ON **Hartafjall*, 'Stag Mountain'.[138]

This last type of change can occasionally be deciphered by the assumption of an effectively tautological *epexegetic* particle and/or reference to word order and cognate material. Whereas compound names coined by speakers of Norse and other Germanic languages tend to take the form of specific – generic (*cf.* Indl; SNF *etc.*), those created by speakers of Gaelic and other Celtic languages tend to place the generic before the specific (*cf.* Cox 2002:33). Where compound Germanic names are found with this word order, they are known as 'inversion compounds' (*cf.* Grant 2002:65-90). When a place-name appears to exhibit standard Germanic word order and what might reasonably be interpreted as ON elements, the existence of close cognates elsewhere in the Norse world would strengthen the case for Norse origins. Gillies (1906:152), for example, remarks of the nature-name Mùirnemeall ['mu:r.nə.mial] in the north of Kilchoman that 'it is a Gaelic name following the Norse order' and that the G origin of the specific, *mùirne*, 'is made certain by the gen. termination, which cannot be Norse'. As there are no early references to this name, however, and Gillies does not appear to have the local pronunciation, we cannot be certain that anything other than the current spelling of this element is Gaelic. And even if this were an accurate reflection of local usage in the recent past, it would not necessarily prove anything other than the adaptation or part translation of a Norse name into Gaelic. Indeed, as Jónsson (1907-15:417) lists a farm called Murnavöllr in Iceland, the chances are that Islay Mùirnemeall is derived from a Norse original, possibly ON **Mýrnavöllr*, 'boggy field, plain' or **Mýrnafjall*, 'boggy hill' (see notes on Beakachey in Kilchoman in Appendix I).

It should be noted, that examples of Norse names with inverted word order have been recorded in the more permanent areas of Norse settlement such as Norway and Orkney – *eg.* Einhallow from ON **Eyin*

[138] As MacAuley (1971-2:314-5), points out, similar problems can also be encountered, albeit through the influence of English language speakers, when dealing with transcriptions of place-names in certain documentary sources such as the early Ordnance Survey maps.

helga 'Holy island' – where they are thought to be indicative of ancient Norse naming practises (*cf.* Matras 1963:141-9; Sandnes 2003:294-307; Kruse Forthcoming:160-1). Neither are Gaelic names with Germanic word order completely unknown in the *Gàidhealtachd.* It is suspected, in fact, that some of these may belong to the oldest onomastic strata in their respective areas and that 'Germanic' word order may therefore be one of the few indications of age in Celtic names (*cf.* Watson 1913:241-5; Cox 2002:19). As a result, there may be instances where the existence of close cognates in ON and G or the likelihood that words have been borrowed from language one into the other make it difficult to gauge whether a name is ON, G or a post-Norse G construction using Norse loan-words and Germanic word-order.

Finally, even where the structure and phonology of a name suggest Norse origins, it can be difficult to give definite interpretations. While the language background of a given generic can often be classified with relative certainty, the far greater range of potential specifics often presents an unwelcome degree of choice. In many cases this will mean several feasible possibilities even after local conditions have been taken into consideration. In others, however, it might not be possible to identify any particularly suitable candidates at all. It must be stressed, therefore, that while the best efforts have been made to provide systematically derived etymologies, many of these have involved a certain amount of speculation and are therefore open to revision. This is an area where more detailed diachronic analysis of local pronunciation may be of some help.

6.3.5 Classification of place-name material

For the purposes of this investigation, linguistic classification of place-name material will be made on two different levels. The first distinction will be made according to formal language background. Thus dependent S, G and ON coinages will be grouped as 'All S', 'All G' and 'All ON', regardless of the language background of any *ex nomine* onomastic units they may contain: *eg.* both Machrie, from G **Machair* and Glenegedale from G *Gleann* + (ON *Eika(r)dalr*) will be classified in the first instance as 'All G'. Where the language background of a name is substantially uncertain, however, it will be classified as 'U'.

Independent names and dependent names containing *ex nomine* onomastic units from the same language background will be classified 'S', 'G' or 'ON'.

Names of a given language background containing *ex nomine* onomastic units from another (as distinct from general loan-words: *cf.* Cox 2002:31,108-10; Stewart 2004:407-17) will also be classified according to the language background of those *ex nomine* onomastic units. Thus 'ONX' indicates an ON name contained within a dependent coinage with *epexegetic* units from a different language background: *eg.*, once again, Glenegedale.

6.3.5.1 General notes on translation

When translating names from ON or G to English, special care must be taken with formally secondary constructs. As we have already seen, the use of *ex nomine* onomastic units is likely to preclude lexical meaning. While a name like Glenegedale might well derive from the addition of G *gleann*, 'valley', to a pre-existing ON **Eika(r)dalr*, 'Oakdale', this does not mean that the name will ever have had the meaning 'Valley of the Oak Valley'. On the contrary, the pleonastic nature of the construct suggests that **Eika(r)dalr* had become lexically void by the time of the secondary coinage. To all intents and purposes, therefore, the appellative meaning of the name will have been 'Valley of **Eika(r)dalr*'. To recognise this distinction between onomastic meaning and historical lexical meaning, place-names containing *ex-nomine* onomastic units will be translated with the *ex nomine* unit in brackets.

A second issue in translation, is that of 'associative meaning' (*cf.* Cox 1998:19-22; 2002:43-4). While a given name might consist of recognisable appellative elements, there is always a possibility that these were originally used in a wider sense than might be implied by their strict lexical meaning. While the settlement-name Kinnabus in Kildalton, for example, can probably be traced to ON **Kinna(r)bólstaðr*, which would give a literal translation of 'Farm by/of the Cheek', comparison with the Icelandic nomenclature suggests that the cheek in question was a steep, smooth faced hillside or cliff (*cf.* Jónsson 1907-15:561-2). As the old farm-district of Kinnabus bordered on the S coast of the Oa and some of the most dramatic cliffs in Islay, it seems likely that just such an associative meaning was used here. While there are other examples in Appendix I where scrutiny of local circumstances has helped to identify and decipher associative meaning, there are bound to be at least a few cases where this has not been possible. Unless otherwise stated therefore, the translations given in etymological sections of Appendix I are a guide to likely original lexical meaning and not necessarily associative meaning.

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6.4 Extra-linguistic analysis – criteria and classification

In practise, the selection of criteria for extra-linguistic analysis depends upon what is being sought from the investigation. Until recently, the goal of most analysts has been to establish a chronological sequence for certain place-name generics. Perhaps the most influential model in this respect was proposed by David Olson in his 1983 study of *Norse Settlement in the Hebrides* (*cf.* MacGregor 1987; Johnston 1990; Gammeltoft 2001 *etc.*).

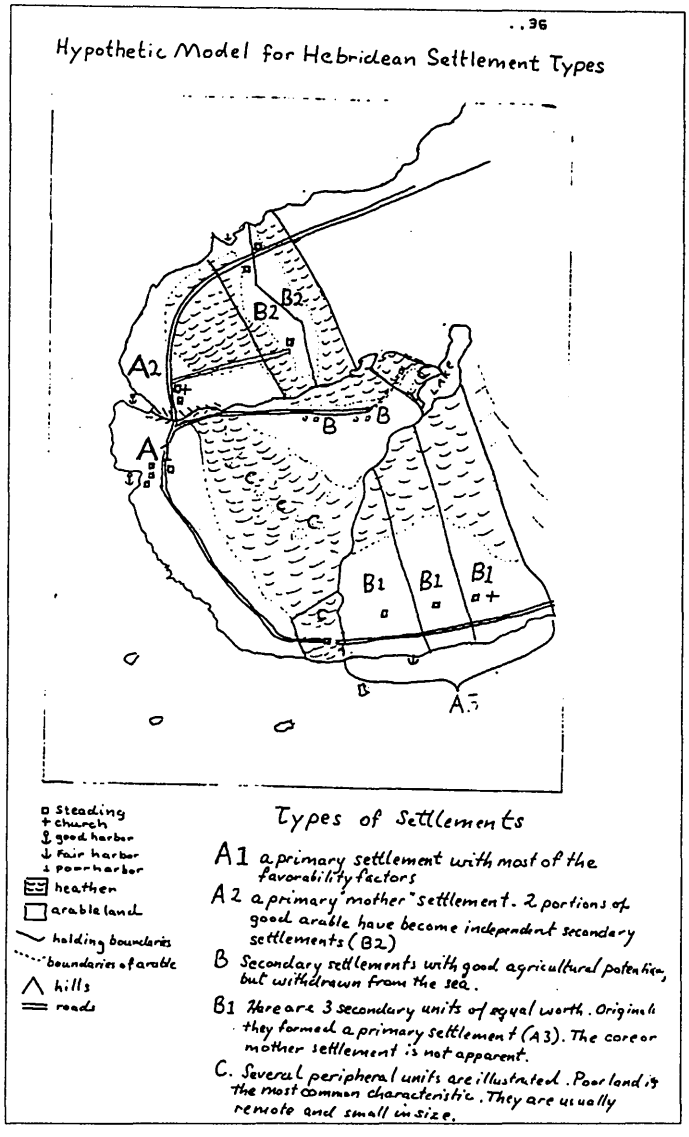


Figure 13: Olson's hypothetical model for settlement development (1983:36)

The first step in Olson's model was to categorise the farms in his study areas as primary (A), secondary (B) or peripheral (C) depending on the perceived quality of their spatial, economic and cultural characteristics (1983:33-42). While it might now be considered bold to claim that: 'the classifications of settlements can help to establish the likely order of occupation of a given set of generics' (1983:33), Olson's three part system of classification could just as easily be adapted to indicate place-name hierarchies. It is certainly simple and as such easily accessible. As Gammeltoft (2001:187) points out, however, this simplicity is both its strength and its weakness. While use of the terms 'primary' and 'peripheral' appears to give Olson's model a conceptual monopoly on the type of sites which are likely to have the greatest bearing on our understanding of Norse settlement, it's three grades are insufficient to reflect the nuances in profiling that are bound to present in such a large and ecologically varied study area as Islay.

The second part of this model is even more problematic. Olson was understandably concerned that his system of classification should reflect differences in the course of settlement development. This led him to subdivide his 'secondary' category into two further groups:

B1: where primary settlements appear to have been divided into two parts of equal quality, although not necessarily size: 'all the resulting units must be regarded as secondary' (1983:35);

B2: where a parcel of land had been separated from a primary settlement, '[t]he contiguous mother settlement may still be regarded as a primary settlement if it clearly retains superior favorability factors' (1983:35).

While these observations are reasonable, the suggestion that these types of division will be readily visible in the landscape is not. This would assume that settlement expansion was unfeasibly regular, evolutionary and, most unlikely of all, complete by the end of the Viking Age. It makes no provision at all for local variation or the many waves of expansion, retraction and re-organisation of settlement patterns which are known to have taken place since. If, for example, two holdings shared all of the characteristics associated with the most economically productive land, but one was only ¼ the size of the other, Olson's system would put them in different categories. It would be wrong, however, to automatically assume that the larger holding was 'primary' in terms of its place in the overall scheme of settlement development whereas the smaller one was 'secondary' or even 'peripheral'. The smaller farm might originally have been the centre of a much larger holding which had since been divided and the larger farm the result of subsequent amalgamation. In Orkney, there are several examples of documented 'primary' settlements whose names have survived the demise of the holdings themselves through transfer to a field (*cf.* Marwick 1952:243-4) and in some cases transfer to a new farm (*cf.* Brink 1988).

So what should be done? It is clear that regardless of how desirable Olson's terminology might be, his model is not particularly well suited to the present survey. Given the occasionally speculative nature of this kind of research, it would be unwise to make the model too complex. By increasing the number of grades in the basic system of classification from three to five, however, it would be easier to establish meaningful distinctions in the relative favourability of the targeted sites. In this scale, the owners or tenants of farm-districts which rank '5' or '4' are likely to have played a primary role in the local socio-economic systems.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HOLDING	RELATIVE FAVOURABILITY
Sites where conditions for settlement are marginal	1 'Marginal'
Sites with some favourable conditions for settlement	2 'Fair'
Sites with some very favourable conditions for settlement	3 'Good'
Sites with very favourable conditions for settlement	4 'Very Good'
Sites with the best conditions for settlement	5 'Best'

Figure 14: Relative Favourability

It could be argued that these observations would be better replaced with a simple restatement of the so-called 'extents' of the different farm-districts listed in the early rentals and charters. As the extent of a given farm-district measured it's overall economic value relative to the other farm-districts in the same territory, it accounts for differences in agricultural emphases in different ecological zones. Thus in the Crown rental of 1509, for example, the district of Broyag (Proaig) is valued at xx shillings, while that of Surnan (Sorn) is given as xxv shillings. While it might seem surprising that the barren, windswept and largely mountainous district of Proaig, has an extent approaching that of the fertile, low-lying and

relatively sheltered district of Sorn, this is due to the much larger area covered by Proaig and its subsequent value as pastureland for sheep-grazing.

As convenient as this data might seem, however, it must be remembered that the earliest Islay rentals are more than 600 years removed from the height of the Viking Age and as such unlikely to be an accurate reflection of Viking Age circumstances. In other words, while we can make a reasonable assessment of the relative arable potential of a given area on the basis of environmental data, we cannot say with anything like the same certainty that Proaig, for example, was an important sheep-raising area during the Viking Age. Moreover, as the regularity of the Islay extents points to an extreme re-organisation following the forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles in the late 15th century, it would perhaps be unwise to take these as an indication of the relative economic potential of discrete sites at any point before the end of the 15th century.[139] That is not to say that the old extents are completely irrelevant to this study. As we shall see in Chapter 8, analysis of the Islay extents alongside other pertinent data may help in the reconstruction of pre-Modern territorial divisions and show whether the Norse adventus was followed by continuity or disjuncture in administrative boundaries and systems. If taken alongside assessment of relative favourability, however, an assessment of 'relative (economic) size' (Figure 13) might also help to illustrate the effect that settlement development has had on the evolution of individual sites.

'EXTENT'	RELATIVE SIZE
< 1 auchtenpart	1 'Very Small'
1 Auchtenpart	2 'Small'
> 1 auchtenpart, but < 1 quarter	3 'Medium'
1 quarter	4 'Large'
> 1 quarter	5 'Very Large'

Figure 15: Relative Size

Combining assessment of 'Relative Size' and 'Relative Favourability' would make some allowances for the possibility that previously primary farms have since been subject to extreme sub-division or contraction. If a 'primary' settlement has remained central and developed along the lines suggested by the traditional, evolutionary model (Chapter 4), we might then expect a classification of '5:5'. It will be clear, however, that a farm with a classification of '1:5' can hardly be classed as peripheral in a hierarchical sense. Nor is it likely to be secondary in the sense that it post-dates the original 'primary' settlement in its district. These classifications will be presented in the tabulated section of Appendix II.

6.5 Favourability factors

Having decided on the body of place-names to be analysed and the linguistic and extra-linguistic classifications that will be applied to them, it remains to specify the favourability factors upon which those classifications will be based. It is generally agreed that these should be easy to collect and grade and allow for a statistically viable study (*cf.* Gammeltoft 2001:187). Steady refinement in the techniques of

[139] While subsequent rental values (as distinct from extents) do begin to show differentiation in value, which might appear more useful in this respect, these distinctions stem back only to the extents of the 15th and 16th centuries.

socio-economic profiling has seen the adoption of a fairly standard range of qualitative and quantitative criteria.[140] Olson (1983:37-41), for example, gathered data on:

1) Distance of the steading from the sea
2) Quality of harbour
3) The approximate amount of arable
4) Quality of soil
5) Proximity to overland routes
6) Proximity to a church
7) Rental value

Of these, only 'The approximate amount of arable' is problematic. Given that Olson's goal was to judge the potential of each site for arable expansion, it is difficult to understand why his estimates were based on the 'cleared land indicated on the 6 inch and 2 ½ inch OS maps' (1983:38). Considering the radically different emphases of modern and medieval agriculture (Chapter 1), it is hard to see how the amount of cleared land on a modern farm relates to the perceived agricultural potential of that area in the Norse period and thus the early centres of prestige settlement. The improvements made in agricultural technology and practise since the Agrarian Revolution of the mid 18th century have brought areas into arable production which would not have been considered viable by medieval farmers and *vice versa* (Chapter 1).

With the exception of factor number three, therefore, all six of these criteria will be adopted here – albeit with slight amendment and under the more general headings of *Access to the Sea*, *Land Quality* and *Cultural Prowess*. As per Olson (1983:37 FN30), it was not felt necessary to gauge access to fresh water and fuel. As Islay is very wet and very peaty, these are both abundant. Besides, settlements without adequate fresh water or fuel would doubtless fail very quickly and most likely disappear without trace. Neither was it felt necessary to concentrate on the availability of building material. While Gammeltoft (2001:189) makes the valid point that 'the amount of wood available today is most likely not the same as during the Viking Age', the builders of primary and prestige settlements are unlikely to have been concerned about the local availability of building materials. Accounts in the later medieval Icelandic sagas[141] back the archaeological evidence from sites such as the Biggings on Papa Stour, Shetland (Crawford 1985, 1999) which suggest that building grade wood was imported where necessary (*cf.* also Chapter 1).

The data gathered for the purposes of extra-linguistic analysis will be presented in Appendices I and II. Fields marked * in the following sections will appear alongside the etymological data and discussions in Appendix I; fields marked † will appear in the tabulated section of Appendix II; and those marked *† will appear in both.

[140] See, for example, Olson (1983:37-42); MacGregor (1987); Johnston (1990), Thomson (1995:51-3), & Gammeltoft (2001:187-9).
[141] In chapter VII of *Gísla saga Súrssonar*, for example (Jónsson 1943:24-6), we learn of two Norwegians who have transported a cargo of timber from Viken in Norway to Dýrafjörður in Iceland. Whether this is an accurate historical record or not, it does at least show that the idea of importing timber was not alien to the author of the saga, as it is unlikely to have been to his Viking Age ancestors. See also Chapter 2 above.

6.5.1 OS National Grid Reference *†

Before the collection of data can begin, it is first of all necessary to link each of the farm-districts in the study with an OS National Grid Reference. Contrary to the discussion on the early format of Islay farm-districts in Chapter 4, this means that each site must be identified with a small grid, representing, effectively, a single point in the landscape. For the purposes of this exercise, these points will correspond to the centres of known and deserted farms as shown on the Ordnance Survey's 1:25,000 scale maps of the island and/or MacDougall's map. While we cannot be certain that these match the earliest or even the traditional centres of habitation in any given locality, this will provide the least subjective framework for the relative study of socio-economic potential in Islay during the Viking Age.

6.5.2 Access to the sea †

The two principle factors in this group – *Distance to the sea* and *Quality of landing place* – must be considered together.

Assessing the quality of the landing place used by the inhabitants of any given farm-district assumes a knowledge of where the most commonly used landing place actually was. There are, however, a great many cases where this is not possible. The best landing place on many coastal farm-districts (*ie.* those bordering on the sea) does not always coincide with the closest stretch of coast to the modern farm buildings. To make matters even more complicated there are often several better alternatives nearby. Similarly, when it comes to inland (land-locked) farm-districts, a higher proximity to the sea in one particular direction does not necessarily indicate the most obvious route of access to the sea. There might, for example, be a loch or mountains in the way – or even social or legal restrictions preventing thoroughfare. In addition to this, owing to the peculiarities of Islay geography, the farther a holding was from the sea, the larger the number of landing places that would have been available and in the cases where overland transit routes are not obvious it is often impossible to tell which of these would have been preferred.

To avoid making false assumptions, therefore, I have decided to limit this category to a simple, relative analysis of the coast closest to the modern farm centres on each farm-district. To reduce the scope for distortion even further, I have decided to exclude inland farm-districts whose modern centres are more than three kilometres from the sea. But even with these qualifications, categorisation is problematic. Maritime technology and practice have changed a great deal since medieval times and as a result so too have perceptions of what makes a good harbour. Munro (1961:7) points out in his preface to Dean Monro's 1549 *Western Isles of Scotland and Genealogies of the Clans* that while:

> [t]he description is full of reference to the excellent harbours among the island [...] not all those mentioned as suitable for 'Highland galleys' are now fit even for fishing boats.

To avoid undue anachronism, categorisation is therefore relative, not absolute, and based on the following broad guidelines.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT	REL. IMP.
Type of beach A pebble beach would have been preferable to sand when it came to beaching or pulling in boats. Whereas pebbles might facilitate movement, small particles of sand would pack tightly against the keel making it difficult to move.	Lowest
Size of beach & Tidal range Although a large landing area may have been preferable to a smaller one, a large tidal range might limit its usefulness .	Medium
Shelter from the SW (prevailing winds) and W (the Atlantic Ocean) ***etc.*** Even large landing places with pebble beaches and a small tidal range would be of limited use if exposed to the prevailing wind and currents of the North Atlantic.	Highest

Leading to the following system of classification

CLASSIFICATION	EXAMPLES	CHARACTERISTICS
LOWEST	Stramnish Beg: Craigfad:	small and fully exposed to the southwest. small and relatively unsheltered bay surrounded by rocks hidden at high tide.
MEDIUM	Kilchoman: Kilarrow:	although large with few obstacles, this beach is sandy, relatively open to the west and has a tidal range of several hundred metres. although very broad and very well sheltered, the tidal range here is huge with the sand flats at mean spring low tide extending more than a kilometre from the high water mark.
HIGHEST	Wester Ellister: Kilnaughton:	relatively large (around 50-100m broad) and sheltered bay with pebble beach and limited tidal range. large beach with low tidal range, completely sheltered from the west and southwest.

Figure 15: Quality of Landing Place

6.5.3 Land quality (LQ) †

The perceived economic value of a given piece of land at a given point in time will depend on the agricultural technology, techniques and emphases specific to that time and place (Chapter 1). In some areas and at certain times this will have meant a concentration on arable production, in others an emphasis on stock-raising. As it is not currently possible to tell where the emphasis lay on different sites during the Norse period, any realistic assessment of relative land quality will have to be based on conditions that are least likely to have changed. This means looking at the basic environmental preconditions for arable farming.

Olson based his assessment of arable potential on relative soil quality. Given the lack of qualitative data available at the time, however, his assessment of soil quality was not based on Islay specific research but more general observations on the type of soil usually formed from various parent materials. While it is reasonable to assert that the usual type of soil formed from 'Gneiss' (now known in an Islay context as Rhinns Complex – Chapter 1) is 'Stoney, sandy, acidic, infertile' and thus 'poor' in quality (*cf.* Olson 1983:39), there is more to arable viability than soil type alone. On the east coast of the Rhinns, for example, where the bedrock consists predominantly of stones of the Rhinns Complex, a combination of

other factors – including: soil accumulation, fertilisation and drainage (both natural and artificial) – had already led to the development of a series of large and profitable farms by the time of the earliest rentals.

The solution is provided in part by the provisional map of Soil Associations which has now been produced by the Soil Survey of Scotland (Appendix II). This map makes combined assessment of landforms, drainage and soil characteristics based on the OS 1:50,000 series. When taken alongside the British Geological Survey's 1998 observations on underlying geology (Appendix II), it will give an even better indication of the basic agricultural potential of a given area. For the purposes of this survey, the soil associations and geological underpinning of Islay's farm-land will be classified as follows:

SIMPLIFIED CLASSIFICATION OF SOIL ASSOCIATIONS (from Appendix II)		
B	–	Boggy
G	–	Grassland
AC	–	Arable soil with a substantial proportion of gleys
AL	–	Light arable soil with a relatively low proportion of gleys, includes machair

SIMPLIFIED GEOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION (from Appendix II)
HIGHLY CALCAREOUS
MOSTLY CALCAREOUS
MIX
OTHER

Overall assessment of arable potential in a given area will be based on the following broad guidelines.

LAND QUALITY				
	H. CALC.	M. CALC.	MIX	OTHER
AL	HIGHEST (7)	HIGHEST	HIGH (6)	MEDIUM-HIGH (5)
AC	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM (4)	MEDIUM-LOW (3)
G	LOW (2)	LOW	LOW	LOW
B	LOWEST (1)	LOWEST	LOWEST	LOWEST

Figure 16: Land Quality

While Gammeltoft (2001:188) also takes note of the *Gradient of the slope*, and Thomson (1995:51-3) the *Distance to the hill*, it was felt that this would be unnecessarily subjective (*cf.* discussion in Chapter 1).

6.5.3.1 'Extent' †

The data here was taken primarily from the MacIan extent of 1507. Where this was lacking, reference was be made to the rentals of 1541, 1722 – the first giving the Old Extent value for (the vast majority of) the farm-districts shown on MacDougall's map – and the charter of 1562. It was also noted if expansion or contraction had taken place in the intervening years.

For the purposes of reconstructing the extent of larger land and territorial divisions information was also gathered on the *Associations** of individual farm-districts in the early rentals and charters. This was further supplemented by an analysis of their onomastic *Context** on the modern OS 1:25,000 scale maps of the area (Explorer sheets 352 and 353). The focus of this last survey, which was also used to help trace onomastic development generally, was Norse name-material preserved in nature-names or settlement-names not shown on MacDougall's map.

6.5.4 Cultural prowess *†

This category consists of four different factors:

Proximity to overland transit routes (OTR)†. The earliest usable records of Islay infrastructure are provided by MacDougall's map of 1749-51. As a number of the tracks shown here forgo the more carefully surveyed routes of the modern road network to take in previously important but now marginalised sites such as Finlaggan (Portineilan), it is safe to assume that many if not all of them represent medieval drove roads. Despite the difficulties associated with overland travel in the pre-modern era, it can nevertheless be assumed that the proximity of a farm to a drove road and the potential of a land-holder to utilise or control access to this facility, would be of some social and economic importance. This factor will be most significant where the drove roads pass directly by the hypothetical farm-centre or ignore them completely.

Proximity to Iron Age Fortifications (IAFs)*†. As was suggested in Chapter 2, the presence of the Iron Age fortifications known as duns, forts, brochs and crannogs can be taken as an indication of competition in the local prestige economy in the years prior to the Norse period. Association of these monuments with a given farm-district may highlight its former importance.

Proximity of medieval Christian monuments (MCM)*†: such as chapels, graveyards, a combination of the two or free standing crosses could also be indicative of the (previous) importance of a given site before, after or during the Norse period. Contrary to the theory discussed in Chapter 4, however, and in contrast to the developmental models used by Olson *et al.*, the presence or absence of MCMs and IAFs was not used in the present extra linguistic analysis of settlement sites. While these might well give a diagnostic indication of (former) prestige status if we were dealing with towns or even villages – as we might be in Orkney or Norway – the idiosyncratic nature of the West Highland farming community (Chapter 4) means that such structures are more often found in liminal parts of land-holdings rather than in physical contiguity with actual settlement sites. As it is therefore difficult to say whether either type of monument was directly associated with the closest modern farm-centre – as opposed to a larger territorial area – analysis of this data will feature instead in the context of land and territorial divisions in Chapter 8.

This category also includes information on:

*Viking Antiquities**†, showing the type of find and, where possible, its likely age.

6.5.5 The process of classification: weighting

The biggest problem in any multi-disciplinary system of classification, and one which is not often adequately addressed, is the issue of weighting – *ie.* of judging the relative importance of the different qualitative and quantitative favourability factors used to make the assessment. Predictably, when it comes to Norse settlement in Scotland, it is always stressed that the most influential factor in the choice of initial settlement sites would have been 'access to the sea'. According to Olson (1983:37), sea transport was of such fundamental importance in the Viking Age that 'few of the first settlements could develop without direct access to the sea'. While Gammeltoft (2001:188) underlines this sentiment, adding quite reasonably that the sea would also have been seen as a valuable source of food, it must be wondered whether the conceptual basis of this assumption derives more from ingrained Victorian notions of Viking Age culture than objective appraisal of settlement circumstances.

Oftedal (1954) noted a close correspondence between Norse settlement-names and the coast in Lewis. But just because this mirrors the situation in certain parts of Norway does not make it a valid model for Norse settlement everywhere. The coastal location of many prestige settlements in the W of Norway is a direct reflex of the physical environment in those areas. In Sogn og Fjordane, for example, where the hills and mountains rise steeply from the fjords, it is simply not possible to build farms further inland. Similarly, while the interior of Lewis is not visually reminiscent of the mountainous uplands of W and SW Norway, it is nevertheless dominated by peat-bogs and otherwise marginal grass-lands which decrease its economic value significantly – the reason, no doubt, why Norse settlers may have chosen to avoid it. It is noteworthy in this respect that in Jæren near Stavanger, in the heart of Olsen's suggested Norse emigration zone (*cf.* Olsen 1928; Brøgger 1929), a more gently undulating landscape means that the best land and some of the oldest farm-names are found far from the sea (Myhre 1984:169-98).

To expect Norse migrants to Islay to ignore fertile yet land-locked areas in blind pursuit of some clichéd unity with the sea is misguided. It is also inconsistent with the likely background to settlement discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. In Islay, the first Norse settlers will have been either honoured clients of high-standing locals or their powerful usurpers. In either case, they are likely to have been given or taken some of the best land in their respective settlement areas. By modern standards at least, the best arable land in Islay is situated in land-locked areas of Kilarrow and Kilmeny, several kilometres from the sea (Chapter 1). Contrary to Johnston's (1990:18) strangely anachronistic assessment, this landscape would have been extremely economically attractive to medieval Norse agriculturalists. Indeed, the apparent preference of Norse farmers for machair soils in more Northerly parts of the western maritime zone (*cf.* Sharples and Parker-Pearson 1999) does not illustrate the need to farm besides the sea at all costs. Instead, it highlights the lack of better or even alternative arable land in those areas which could not be broken without great effort. Excavations by Sharples and Parker Pearson (1999) on South Uist have pointed to substantial continuity of settlement sites from the Iron Age into the Norse period – suggesting, in my opinion, Norse appropriation of the best available arable land.

While the idea that proximity to the sea was essential for good communication or access to marine resources is valid to an extent, it is usually presented with the subtext that inland settlement is synonymous with vast distances, difficult terrain and therefore social and economic isolation. The settlement of a small island like Islay cannot, however, be compared to land-taking in huge continents like North America or Australia, or even smaller areas such as Iceland or Greenland, where these concerns were often realistic. As no part of Islay is further than 8km from the sea, it could be reached on foot within an hour or two if the need arose – even quicker on horseback. 'Distance from the sea' is therefore hardly likely to have been a major impediment to the choice of settlement site.

Neither would lack of direct access to the sea preclude a Norse population from communications routes or access to marine resources. According Norse legal tradition 'the sea has no owner but is subject to the king's jurisdiction', which meant that anyone could fish in it. There were exceptions to this general rule. Rights to fishing, for example, or beached whales followed the land. Were one to catch fish or beach a whale on someone else's land, the landowner would have been entitled to a certain part of the catch (*cf. Gulaþing*§85, 93, 149, 150).

It general, however, it seems that the land-bound and the land-less had more rights of access to the sea and maritime resources than restrictions. In the Spangereid district of Vest-Agder, the poor and dispossessed, known locally as *de båtløse* 'the boatless', were designated sites for *sædfiske* 'craig-fishing', just as they were in Orkney. Study of the Spangereid area of Vest-Agder in SW Norway by Frans-Arne Stylegar has shown that while 37 of the 55 registered farms bordered on the sea, a further 8 of the land-bound farms had the right to keep boat-houses on neighbouring coastal farms. Others had other kinds of beach rights, such as the right to store timber (*cf.* Stylegar 1999). In other parts of Norway, such as Holmestrand in the Vestfold, many upland farms had *strandrett* 'beach rights' in the Oslofjord, including the rights to *notfiske* ('net-fishing' for mackerel, herring and sprat), kelp-burning and salt making (F-A. Stylegar pers. comm.).

While many of these rights were customary, there is enough material in the Old Norse law codes to suggest that owners or occupiers of inland sites were not particularly disadvantaged by the inland nature of their holdings *per se*. In most cases, the greater economic disadvantage by far came from the poorer quality of arable land in the inland and upland areas. This does not mean that access to the sea was unimportant to the first settlers in Islay. But as they are likely to have had adequate access wherever they chose to settle, the more powerful settlers are likely to have been more concerned with the quality of the land they controlled. Unlike Lewis and large parts of western Norway, this would have meant inland areas. Moreover, even if access to the sea and marine resources was limited to 'coastal' holdings, this does not preclude powerful individuals from having controlling interests in several land-holdings from the outset. A chieftain may have elected to hold court at an inland farm, while retaining control or rights of access to a neighbouring coastal unit.

The assessments of 'Relative Favourability' in this survey will therefore be based primarily on *Land Quality*, with distinction being made on the basis of *Access to the Sea* and *Proximity to Overland Transit Route* in that order.

SECTION III: INTERPRETATION

Introduction to Section III

Interpretation of the data presented in Appendices I, II and III will be split into two separate but complementary parts. The farm-districts and their names will first of all be examined individually. By application of the techniques outlined in Chapters 4 and 6, it is hoped to identify patterns in the nomenclature which might in turn prove useful in establishing place-name hierarchies for the island. While the ultimate goal of this exercise is to determine whether any of the Gaelic material is likely to pre-date the Norse *adventus*, it might also prove useful in establishing just how long the island's name-giving community remained Norse-speaking or perhaps even linking patterns in Islay's ON nomenclature with better documented events elsewhere.

This individual analysis will be followed in Chapter 8 by an examination of the farm-districts in their local territorial and administrative contexts. By so doing, it is hoped to shed more light on the mysterious Islay 'quarterland' system of land-division and determine how, if at all, this relates to the better documented Irish and Norse systems of the neighbouring areas. If the Islay extents proved to be a direct legacy of the Dalriadan 'tech' system implied by the *Senchus fer nAlban*, it would point to a significant degree of contact between the incoming Norsemen and the indigenous population. If on the other hand, they were shown to correspond to the Norse colonial 'ounceland' system of land division, the case for a more aggressive take-over would be strengthened.

CHAPTER 7: ISLAY PLACE-NAMES & THEIR GENERICS

7.1 Distribution of settlement-names by language background

Stephen MacDougall's map of 1749-51 shows 178 distinct settlement names (Figures 9 and 17). Not all of these, however, will be included in the following analyses. One, Glebe in Kilarrow, is an independent Scots English construct and therefore irrelevant to the present study. So too is Pendicle of Ballinaby in Kilchoman. Although this is a formally tertiary Scots English construct, the dependent Gaelic *ex nomine* onomastic unit *Ballinaby on which it is based appears to have been transferred to the area from the nearby farm-district of Ballinaby in the 17th or 18th century.[142]

A further 6 names which were considered linguistically uncertain must also be disregarded. These are: Gearach in Kilchoman; Corary, Lagboy and Laggan in Kilarrow; Leek in Kilmeny; and Leek Kannokaky in Kildalton.

In addition to this, MacDougall's map shows 9 contrasted pairs of settlement names, where the division of an earlier farm-district into two discrete parts has been mirrored by the creation of two new names through the attachment of contrasting modifiers to the parent name (*cf.* Cox 2002:35-6, Chapter 4). Thus we have Wester and Easter **Elister**,[143] West and East **Kìllchoman** and **Sanog**more and –beg in Kilchoman, Lower and Upper **Killeenan** in Kilarrow, **Dudil**more and –beg and Upper and Nather **Stoinsha** in Kilmeny, and Lower and Upper **Lorin**, **Ballynaghton**more and –beg and **Stramnish** More and Beg in Kildalton. In view of the peculiarities of Islay settlement distribution (Chapter 4), it must be assumed that the appearance of these contrasted pairs in the early records is indicative of fiscal division rather than settlement development *per se*. It will be remembered that while most farm-districts consisted of more than one arable 'centre', only the names of the farm-districts themselves tend to be preserved in the records. To include both names from each contrasted pair in this survey would distort the ratios of ON:G place-names and the statistical analysis of extra-linguistic favourability. As in Thomas' (1881-2) investigation, therefore, only the uncontrasted element of these names will be registered here. Unlike Thomas' investigation, however, where the omission is not justified, it is the least economically favourable in each pair that will be disregarded here.

[142] This can be contrasted with 'Alelay: Pendicle of Nosebridge' in Kilarrow, where the established name for the area is clearly stated as Alelay.

[143] NB: Where place-names are discussed in immediate context of MacDougall's map, the spelling conventions of the map will be followed. For more general discussion, however, spellings will be taken from the modern OS Explorer sheets (352 & 353).

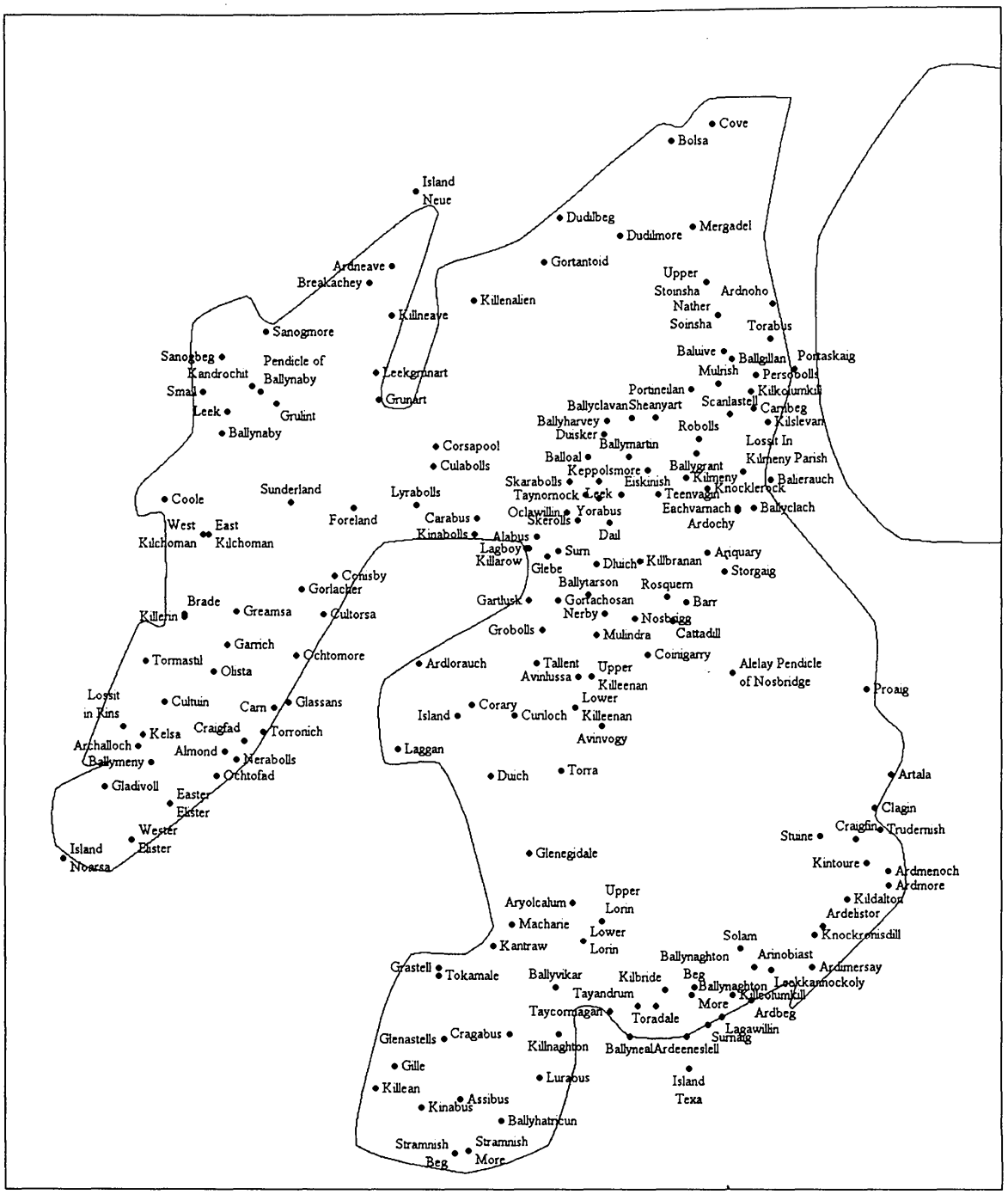


Figure 17: Settlement names on MacDougall's map of Islay (adapted from BI:552-3)

This leaves a total of 161 place-names derived from G or ON onomastic material,[144] which can be tabulated as follows:

Parish	Farm-names	U	All S	S	CP	Total - (U+S+CP)	All G	ONX.[145]	ON	G+GX	ON+ONX
Kilchoman	47	1	5	1	3	43	20	7	21	14	28
Kilarrow	41	3	3	1	1	36	18	1	18	17	19
Kilmeny	41	1	2	-	2	38	28	6	9	23	15
Kildalton	49	1	3	-	3	45	31	10	13	22	23
Totals	178	6	13	2	9	161	97	24	61	76	85

NB 'U' = Uncertain; 'All S' and 'All G' = all formally Scots English and Gaelic place-names respectively; 'CP' = Contrasted pair(s); 'S', 'G' and 'ON' = the combined total of independent S, G and ON coinages and dependent S, G and ON coinages containing *ex nomine* onomastic from the same language background. 'ONX' and 'GX' = ON or G *ex nomine* onomastic units from dependent coinages of a different language background.

Parish	% of farm-districts with ON + ONX names	
	Thomas' Survey	This Survey
Kilchoman	40%	65%
Kilarrow	32%	53%
Kilmeny		40%
Kildalton	33%	51%
Total	34%	53%

Figure 18: Ratio of ON to G settlement-names

As can be seen from the tables above, the resultant break-down of figures points to a considerably higher percentage of ON settlement-names and G/S settlement-names based on ON *ex nomine* onomastic units in Islay than was suggested by Thomas. Indeed, while Thomas (1881-2:273) judged the ratio of ON:G farm-names in the 1872-3 Valuation Roll to be around 1:2, it appears that the relationship in 1749-51 was in excess of 1:1.

Considering that these revised findings are based on material from the immediate pre-Improvement era, it could be argued that they are more likely to reflect the nomenclature of the Norse period than Thomas' survey of the 1872-3 data. As with Thomas' survey, however, even this revised approach fails to account for the changes in agricultural emphases, settlement patterns, culture, language and undoubtedly therefore nomenclature, that have taken place since the island's Norse period.

[144] NB: A distinction is made here between ON onomastic material and ON appellatives which have been borrowed into Gaelic and included in Gaelic onomastic material (see above).

[145] While it is possible that a further three G names – Ballychatricun, Ballyvicar and Ardmenoch (all in Kildalton) – might be seen as formally secondary G constructs containing the ON *ex nomine* onomastic units: **Kattahrygginn*, **Vikar*, **Miðnes* (see Appendix I), this was considered too speculative to warrant the classification of these names as ONX.

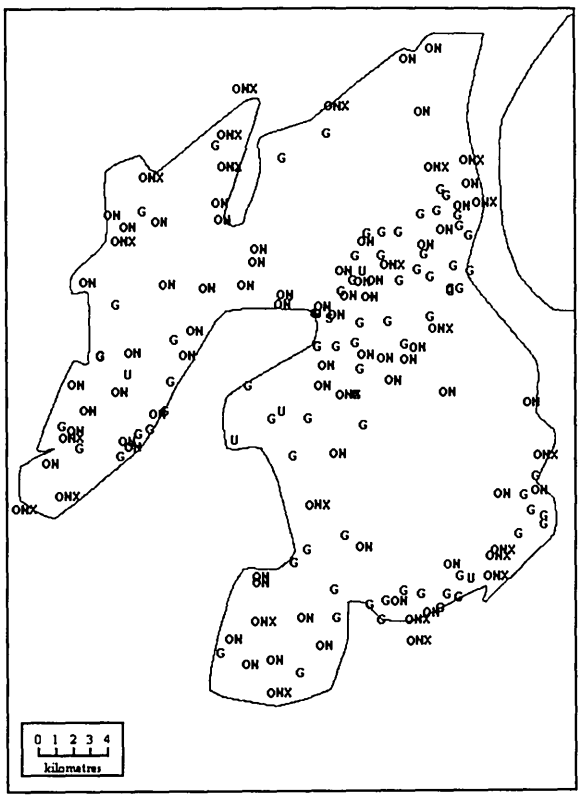
7.1.1 Patterns in space

When the basic linguistic categorisations from Appendix I are plotted on a map (Figure 19 below), it is clear that no substantial part of Islay was without either Gaelic or Norse farm-names. This is in stark contrast to the pronouncements of Nieke (1984:313) who claimed on the basis of place-name evidence that only the Oa and the 'central lowlands' had been 'penetrated' by the Norse. If we accept the 'User-Group' theory set out in Chapter 4, it also seems unlikely that such a fine patchwork could reflect the kind of linguistically chequered community implied by MacEacharna (1976:82-3) and Olson (1983:134-76). For such a pattern to present in 1749-51, there must previously have been a sizeable, stable and socially prestigious Norse speaking community in Islay, whose influence was not confined to the immediate vicinity of palpably Norse settlement-names – precisely what we would expect of settlement driven by pre-feudal Norse magnates. Unlike the stereotypical francophone lord in Anglo-Norman England, for example, who had the social and military infrastructure to remain isolated from his English-speaking peasants, the local and regional *höfðingjar* (ON 'headmen/ chieftains') in early medieval Norway would have lived, and to a certain extent worked, alongside their retainers – communicating with them personally on a day to day basis. If there had been substantial continuity amongst the island's Gaelic-speaking population, we might expect it to have quickly absorbed any elite veneer of Norse settlers – in a broadly similar way to what is believed to have happened to the invading Franks in post-Roman Gaul (see above). For so many Norse farm-names to have survived into modern times, therefore, points more clearly to disjuncture than continuity – certainly in language and probably also population.

While it is possible that some of the Gaelic farm-names on MacDougall's map were preserved by surviving indigenes, it seems just as likely that any genuine onomastic survivals from the pre-Norse period did so by virtue of adoption by Norse incomers – it may have been expedient in the early stages of settlement, for reasons of tribute gathering *etc.*, to adopt certain Gaelic farm-names (see below and Chapter 8). There is a strong possibility, however, that others are post-Norse coinages masking the previous existence of now lost Norse settlement names. The name of the fishing village of *Bun Abhainne*, for example, at the SW tip of the Rhinns, appears to be a direct translation of an earlier ON **Áróssey* (see notes on Orsay in Kilchoman). Others may have been replaced by completely new coinages. But if so, when and how might this Gaelic renaissance have taken place?

Although it would be misleading to talk as per Nieke *et al.* of marked regional concentrations of either ON or G settlement names, it is nevertheless possible to pick out localities on the island with greater concentrations of Gaelic or Norse farm-names. One way of highlighting these is through a process of neighbour analysis, whereby the relative percentage of each farm-district's neighbours with G and ON names are plotted graphically. While this cannot, of course, be taken as an absolute barometer of the Gaelic or Norse character of a given locality during the Norse period, it does help to identify patterns in the landscape at a time when the last onomastically dominant language, *ie.* Gaelic, was creating names.

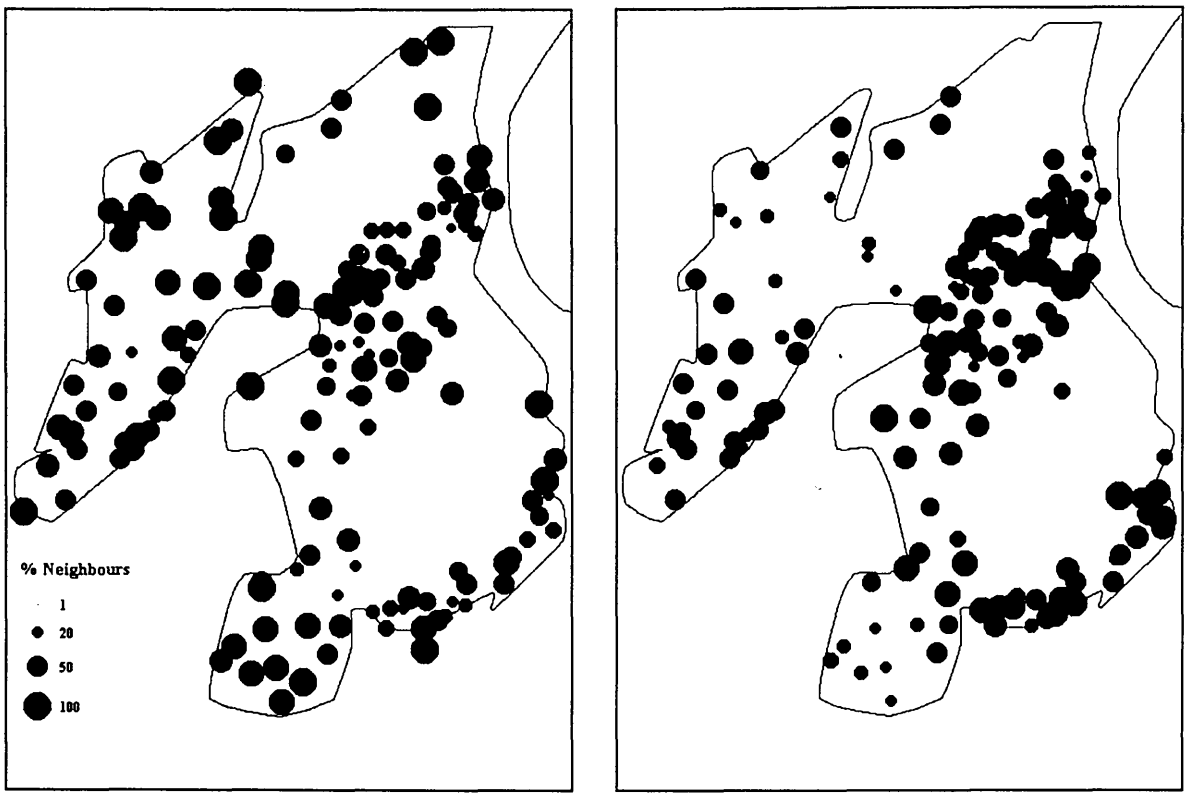
As can be seen from Figures 19 & 20 below, ON and ONX farm-names have continued to dominate the Oa, the N half of the Rhinns and adjoining part of Kilarrow, the NE part of Kilmeny and the SE extremity of Kilarrow. They have also survived in contiguous stretches along the river Sorn and the upper reaches of the river Laggan. Concentrations of G farm-names, on the other hand, can be found around Laggan in Kilarrow (1), in a swathe extending along the N bank of the river Sorn and loch Finlaggan, continuing eastwards to Ballighillan (2) and again in significant numbers around Lossit in the SE part of Kilmeny parish (3). They can also be found around Ballyvicar (4), Lagavulin (5) and Kintour (6) in Kildalton; down the SW coast of the Rhinns (7) and around the centre of its east coast (8). To automatically assume that these divisions mirror the maximum extent of Norse ethnicity in Islay, however, as many previous writers on the subject have done (*cf.* MacEacharna 1976; Olson 1983; Nieke 1983, 1984), would be to ignore the subsequent impact of the Gaelic language and culture.



KEY

G	Names which are fundamentally Gaelic in origin – *ie.* independent Gaelic coinages, dependent Gaelic coinages where the *ex nomine* onomastic unit is Gaelic and dependent coinages in Scots English where the *ex nomine* onomastic unit is Gaelic
ONX	Dependent coinages in non-Norse languages where the *ex nomine* onomastic unit is Norse. While almost all of these are formally Gaelic, there are also a few Scots English examples
ON	Independent Norse coinages, or dependent Norse coinages where the *ex nomine* onomastic unit is Norse

Figure 19: Distribution of farm-names by language background



% of neighbours with ON/ONX names *% of neighbours with G/ GX names*

Figure 20: Neighbour analysis

7.1.2 Possible centres of Gaelic resurgence?

There are reasons to believe that Islay's transformation from Norse colonial to High Medieval Gaelic society preceded that of other more northerly parts of the Hebrides (see below). Close links with Godred Crovan's Hibernophile Manx dynasty (*cf.* Megaw 1976:16-18) must have coupled with the activities of expansionist Irish interests in the Isles (*cf.* Duffy 1992) to hasten the re-introduction of Gaelic as a prestige language perhaps as early as the 11th century. While estimations as to the extent of this early influence would be largely speculative, closer examination of the historical record points to several distinct periods of marked Gaelic influence in subsequent centuries. The influx of Gaelic peoples and traditions appears to have been particularly strong in the years following the 'invitation' of Somerled to the Isles in 1156 (CRM§§40-40a) during the *floruit* of the MacDonalds of Dunyvaig and the Glens in the 16th and early 17th centuries and (several decades after) the acquisition of the Islay estate by Sir John Campbell of Cawdor in 1614.

After 1156,[146] and the likely arrival in Islay of the aspiring Celtic magnate Somerled mac Gilla-brigte,[147] the island begins to emerge from its early medieval Dark Age as the centre of a fiercely Gaelic sea-kingdom (*cf.* MacDonald 1998: 39-67). When Somerled died in 1164 he was dignified in the Annals of Tigernach (AT1164.6) as '*rí Indsi Gall & Cind Tire*', 'king of *Innse Gall* and Kintyre'. Although there is some debate as to just what this title signified (MacDonald 1997:58-60), it is clear that Somerled and his descendents were regarded as the region's leading nobles. It is also clear that they made a concerted effort to embellish the kin-based ideology of the Celtic world and forge new links with ancient symbols of power,[148] not just to enhance their legitimacy as rulers of the Isles, but most probably also to emphasise their independence from the feudal, Anglophile kings of mainland Scotland (*cf.* MacDonald 1997:39-67).

An important part of this new Hebridean elite culture would have been the promotion of the Gaelic language, either directly through its use 'at court' and in official documents – as can be seen from the 1408 document (see below) – or indirectly through associated cultural practice.[149] This newfound prestige status is likely to have had a major impact on naming traditions, with the incoming Gaels being influential enough in both a social and military sense to leave their mark on the local nomenclature. It can be little co-incidence, for example, that the islands acquired by Somerled from Man in 1156 – Arran, the Islay group, the Mull group, the Small Isles and the Long Island from North Uist southwards – now show a considerably lower level of Norseness in terms of their nomenclature than Skye, Lewis and Harris (see notes on ON *–setr* below).

As rulers of the Isles, the MacSorleys are likely to have employed the full complement of professionals, office-bearers and craftsmen expected of high-ranking Gaels. Later records show that many of the more important of these appointees were granted lands within a convenient distance of their new lords. The list of Islay lands 'set' by the Crown Commissioners in 1506 (ER XIII:799), for example, can be presumed to include the property of most of its socially significant land-holders after the MacDonald forfeiture of 1493. It includes the quantified but unspecified holdings of Moricio MacSuyna, whose possible family connections with the MacOsennags and MacSchinnocht of South Kintyre led Lamont (1958:103-4 FN3) to identify him as the hereditary harper;[150] Lachlan MacSuyna, whom Lamont (*ibid.*) tentatively identified

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[146] CRM§41 'In 1156 during the night of the Epiphany a naval battle was fought between Godred [Olafsson, king of Man] and Somerled [mac Gilla-brigte], and there was much slaughter on both sides. When daybreak came, however, they arrived at an agreement, whereby they divided the kingdom of the Isles between them'.

[147] See Sellar (1966:123-142) for a concise account of Somerled's background and rise to power in Argyll.

[148] It is perhaps significant that the MacDonalds should choose the banks of Loch Finlaggan for their royal inauguration ceremonies when there is some archaeological evidence for similar activity in the area during the pre-Norse period (Caldwell 2003:61-75). Although it might also seem equally poignant that they should continue to patronise the Abbey of Iona and cult of Columba so favoured by the *Cenél nGabrain* kings of Dalriada, it must be remember that both appear to have been more recently patronised by the Norse (see Chapter 3). As such, it would be difficult to say that this apparent continuity of prestige centre and religious associations did not involve transmission through Norse intermediaries.

[149] Certain important aspects of this culture, however, were either demonstrably or probably Norse – *eg.* maritime technology (Rixson 1997), military organisation and weaponry (Marsden 2003) and possible even administrative systems and practises (Caldwell 2004:71-85).

[150] Although, as Caldwell (forthcoming) points out, there is no convincing evidence to link the MacIlshenochs with Islay, this does not necessarily mean there were not other orders of harper with lands in Islay or elsewhere. The important thing to remember about the McSuynas, however, is their social status, which to judge from their land-holdings was substantial.

as the bard;[151] Gilchrist MacVaig (McBeth), the hereditary surgeon; Archibald MacKofee (McFie), maor or coroner of the Midward and hereditary record-keeper to the Lords of the Isles; and Odony MacKy (MacKay) of the Rhinns who seems likely from later accounts to have been the MacDonald's maor in that area (Caldwell forthcoming). Interestingly, another branch of the MacKay family we might have expected to appear in this list – the traditionally important MacKays of the Southward (=Kildalton) – appears to have been replaced by one Nigel MacCane, a relative of John MacIan – presumably, as Lamont suggests, because MacKay had been forced into temporary exile alongside the MacDonalds of Dunyvaig following the forfeiture of John II in 1493 (see below). The notable Islay family of MacBrayne, the *brithem* or 'judge', is also conspicuous by its absence. Lamont (1958:104 FN3) explains this omission in terms of the Crown instructions to John MacIan of 10th June 1506 that his land-court be held 'in proper form [...] after the order of our sovereign lord's law' (ERXII:703-4). With the sovereign at the time, James VI, being anxious to impose the lowland legal system on the Isles, it may have been that the *brithem* was deliberately sidelined in favour of the last name in the list – the mysterious Angus son of Angus (Lamont 1958:104 FN 3).

In addition to these professional and office bearers, at least two important families of craftsmen are named in the later sources. As Caldwell (forthcoming) points out, certain craftsmen and especially smiths had much higher status in Gaelic society than they did in mainland Scotland or more recent times. It is therefore significant that we find the MacNokairds – from G *mac na ceard*, 'son of the smith, although more specifically brass or fine metal smith' (*cf.* Black 1962:552) – recorded in the 16th and 17th century rentals; and the MacGowans – from G *mac gobhainn* 'son of the black smith' – attested in the late 17th or early 18th century *History of the Campbells of Craignish* (MSHS IV:205). While other possible examples of hereditary craftsmen and professionals have been suggested by Caldwell (forthcoming), *eg.* the MacInleisters – meaning 'son of the fletcher' – and the MacTaggarts – from 'son of the priest' – there is as yet no further evidence for their status as such.

When the earlier rentals are examined, a possible correlation begins to emerge between the areas where G farm-names are concentrated and areas likely to have been under the control of important Gaelic families in the later Middle Ages. Particular attention can be drawn in this respect to the extract of the 1541 *Rentalia Domini Regis* covering Islay. While this document lacks details on a dozen or so farm-districts known from earlier sources (Chapter 4), it is the earliest (almost) comprehensive guide to Islay tenants before the Cawdor rentals of the 17th century. As usual, however, care must be taken when extrapolating this material backwards. Just because an individual or his family is linked with a given holding in 1541 does not mean that they always had been.

[151] Lamont makes this statement in full knowledge that the hereditary bards in S Kintyre were the McVurichs (see previous footnotes; *cf.* Caldwell forthcoming).

7.1.2.1 The area around Laggan in the SW extremity of Kilarrow

In 1541, Laggan was held along with 'Dowauch, Ardlarauch, Corrare, Ilaneynnuisk, [and] the fishing of the Laggane' by Gilpatrik Bryon. We can be reasonably sure that these lands had already belonged to the Brion or MacBrayne family for quite some time. The Gaelic language charter of 1408 – wherein Donald, Lord of the Isles, granted lands in Kildalton & Oa parish to Brian 'Vicar' MacKay – was witnessed by four men, one of whom was a certain Pat MacAbhriuin (BI:16-18). While this does not confirm the landholdings of the MacBraynes in the early 15th century, it does point to their social status – an observation supported by analysis of the family name. This derives from OIr *brithem*, 'maker of judgements'; 'a man learned in the law [...] appointed by the king to deal with cases of [...] public law [who] ranks next to the king's consort in the order of precedence' (Binchy 1979:79). The presence of a Torr a'Bhreitheimh or 'hill of judgement' (NR 309 576) a little over 3km to the NW of Laggan farm suggests that the Islay MacBraynes were indeed 'judges' and that their family seat was in the Laggan area. This geographical connection is further supported by a story heard by Martin Martin in the early 1690s that 'the Brion of Islay, a famous judge, is according to his own desire, buried standing on the brink of the river Laggan, having in his right hand a spear, such as they use to dart at the salmon' (Martin 2002:149).

With the holding of Laggan, as outlined in the 1541 *Rentalia Domini Regis*, commanding the strategically important entrance to the sheltered inner part of Loch Indaal and the mouth of the river Laggan – in addition to sizeable tracts of good arable and pasture-land – it would have made a fitting estate for the *brithem*. Further links between the local nomenclature and the MacSorley period are suggested by the name of the main natural harbour adjacent to the current Laggan farm-centre, Port Ghillebride (Appendix I).

7.1.2.2 The area around the NW and NE banks of loch Finlaggan

The proximity of this area to the Lordship epi-centre on Eilean Mòr (see notes on Finlaggan in Kilmeny in Appendix I) and the fact that it is missing from the 1541 rental (Chapter 4) marks it out as a former demesne holding of the Lords of the Isles in Islay (*cf.* Caldwell, forthcoming). Whether the cultural significance of this area in the later Middle Ages is a legacy from the Norse period is difficult to say. Recent radio carbon dating of the crannog which forms the basis of Eilean na Comhairle (G 'Isle of the Council') has revealed major structural work in the 6th century AD and thus a convenient *terminus post quem* for the dun which sits on top (Caldwell 2001:173). There is as yet no evidence for the continued prestige status of this site through the Viking Age. But even if there proves to have been none, it is easy to see why the MacSorleys would have chosen this part of the Island for their centre of operations. Finlaggan in particular lies in the sheltered heart of the fertile Sorn valley only a few kilometres to the W of the strategically important transit route of the Sound of Islay.

7.1.2.3 The area around Lossit in Kilmeny

This area, which comprises the SE arm of Kilmeny to the S and E of the Ballygrant Burn, does not appear to have any direct links with the island's later medieval Gaelic nobility. Indeed, with the exception of Ardach (2 ½ M) and Arewoware (16s 8d), let to a certain Donaldo MacKawis, it is missing from the 1541 rental. The most likely explanation for this omission is its ownership by the Church – a fact made clear by the rentals of 1507 and 1509 and the 1617 charters transferring the tenandry of Lossit to the Cawdor Campbell lairds of Islay (BI:353). Why the farm-names in the Kilmeny portion of this tenandry should be predominantly Gaelic, when those of the Kilarrow portion are predominantly Norse, will be discussed in more detail below. It must surely be significant, however, that this district is both fertile and faces onto the central section of the Sound of Islay – an area which was used as an extended staging post for MacDonald war-fleets. As late as 1569, for example, Sorley Buy, the younger brother of James MacDonald of Dunyvaig and the Glens, is recorded as having massed a fleet of 32 ships and 4000 men in the Sound in preparation for an abortive invasion of Ireland (Cal.S.P.Ire. 1509-71:416).

It should also be noted that the fortified island in Loch Lossit bears the name Eilean Mhic Iain or 'MacIan's Island'. As the name is first attested in a feu charter registered on 6 April 1576 (RCAHMS 1984:343, §304 n.4), the later medieval appearance of its perimeter wall has been taken by the RCAHMS (1984:154) to indicate that 'the island takes its name from John MacIan of Ardnamurchan, who in the 1490s [following the forfeiture of the Lordship] became bailie of Islay and received large grants there'. There is some evidence to suggest that the Lordship centre at Finlaggan was dismantled around this time, perhaps as part of government policy to suppress symbols of MacDonald power (Caldwell 2001:174-5). This being the case, it is no doubt significant that MacIan should choose the adjacent area for his base of operations. Did he want to remain as close as possible to the traditional centre of power without perpetuating MacDonald symbolism?

It may be important in this respect that the feu charter of 1576 lists the extensive Iona Abbey lands of *Moychilis* – including 'Lossett with ane Ile thair of calit Ellan Moyborg alias ellan Vekkayne' – which were then granted by John, Bishop of the Isles, as commendator of Iona Abbey to Hector MacLain, 'baile of the Rinns' (RCAHMS 1984:154). This allows the loch itself to be identified with Monro's 'Loch Moyburg, quhairin thair lyis an Ile pertaining to the Bishops of the Iles' (Monro 2002:309).[152] Although the names Moyburg and Moychilis are no longer extant, they are amongst the earliest attested in Islay, appearing as *Magenburg* and *Mangecheles* in the papal constitution of 9th December 1203 'confirming the rights of the [newly formed Benedictine] Abbey of Iona in certain matters' (BI:5-8). Given the clear ON antecedence of 'Magenburg' (**Meginborg* ?), it could be argued that this area was of some significance during the Norse period. Continuity of this symbolic importance, in addition to the general fecundity of the area, might once again explain its appropriation by MacIan.

[152] As the RCAHMS (1984:343, §304 n.5) go on to point out, although confusion between Iona Abbey and Bishopric lands was unusual in Monro's day, it can be explained in this case by the union of the two interests around 1500.

7.1.2.4 The area around Ballyvicar

The grouping of G farm-names between Machrie and Ballyneal forms the heart of the territory granted by Donald, Lord of the Isles, to Brian Bhicaire Mhagaodh (Brian 'Vicar' MacKay) in the Gaelic language charter of 1408. It has been suggested by Steer & Bannerman (1977:88) that the 'vicar' element of his name might point to an ecclesiastical rank, in which case there could be grounds for seeing the MacKays as the unattested hereditary chaplains of the Lordship. Indeed, another member of that family, Aodh MacCei (Hugh MacKay – the fourth witness to the 1408 charter?), was already parson of Kilchoman by 1393.

The strategic importance of this area is enormous, controlling not only the three-way overland route between Kildalton, the Oa and Kilarrow, but also the sheltered bays of Kilnaughton Bay, Loch Leodamais and Port Alsaig, which provide some of the best anchorage to.the immediate north of the North Channel. Given that it also sits atop the vein of limestone bedrock, which emerges near Ballyvicar and extends in a south-westerly direction to Kinnabus, it is not surprising that it should have attracted the attention of the incoming Gaelic aristocracy.

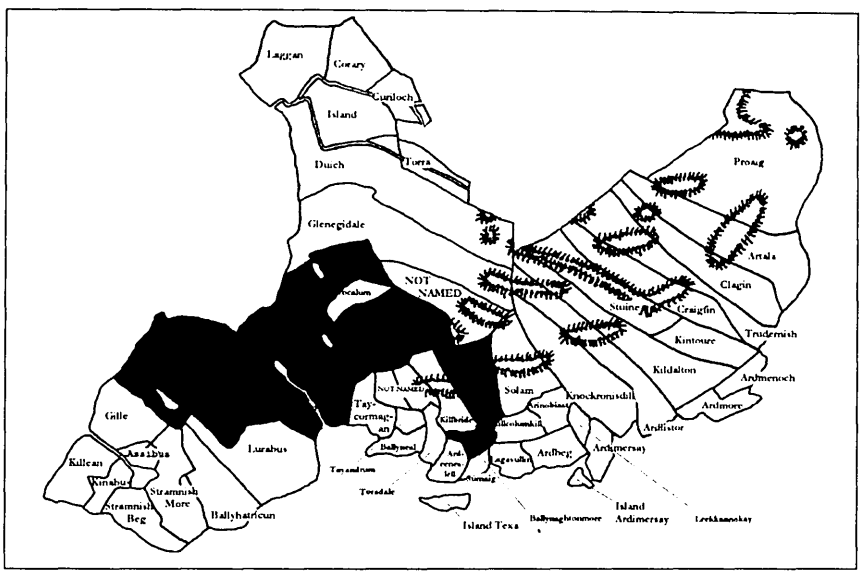


Figure 21: The holdings of Brian 'Vicar' MacKay listed in 1408

Despite the upheaval which accompanied the forfeiture of the Lordship in 1493, the MacKays appear to have retained a large part of the 1408 holdings until at least the middle of the 16th century. According to the extract from the Lordship rental of 1541, the lands of Ballenele (2 ½ M), Torodill (2 ½ M), Bra and Tydrum (2 ½ M), Branabols (2 ½ M) and Kilbreid Ovir (8s 4d) were controlled directly by one Alester MacKay; with a memorandum under Branabolls pointing out that he also controlled the lands of Cragapols (16s 8d) and Twa Kilbrydis (16s 10d) belonging to the monastery of Ilantassan (Texa). In addition to this, the lands of Ballenachtane Westir and Eister (2 ½ M each) were in the hands of Johanni MacKay and Gillaspie and Neill MacKay respectively. Of the remaining lands in the 1408 document which are listed in the 1541 rental, Grawstill and Kitray (2 ½ M), Tocumyll (8s 4d) and Cornepollis (10s)

are shown to be in the possession of Sir Johne of Broloquhone, with Glenestell Ochterach (13s 4d) belonging to Aichane McCauchane and Glennastill Etrach (10s) to Gilpatrick Bryon (see above).

7.1.2.5 The area around Lagavulin

While Lagavulin itself is a relative newcomer to the documentary record (1686), it lies at the heart of the old district of Larg, centred on the MacDonald stronghold of Dunyvaig (see notes on Lagavulin in Kildalton in Appendix I) – an area whose Irish connections were strengthened dramatically towards the end of the 14th century.

Following the death of John MacDonald in 1387, the first to style himself *de Ile* ('of Islay'), the lordship passed to Donald, the first-born son of his second marriage. Although Donald's brother John Mòr inherited lands in Kintyre and Islay, including the castle at Dunyvaig, he seems to have been less than pleased with this settlement. After rising in rebellion against his brother, leading to his defeat and expulsion to Ireland, he entered the service of Niall Og O'Neill as constable of Ulster. While there, he married the heiress Margery Bisset, acquiring the large tracts of land known as the Glens of Antrim in north-east Ulster in the process. On his eventual reconciliation with Donald, John returned to Islay in 1401 and established himself as the ancestor of Clan Donald South, the MacDonald's of Dunyvaig and the Glens, with lands in Islay, Kintyre and Antrim (*cf.* Marsden 2003:47-8).

This move can be seen as a consolidation of existing MacDonald links with Ulster. A similar dispute almost a century earlier had seen Angus Og MacDonald usurp the position of his older brother Alexander Og[153] and effectively exile his sons, Turlough, John Dubh and Sorley, to Ireland (Marsden 2001:43-4). It seems likely that the MacDonalds had already been active across the North Channel by this point. In 1290, the Annals of Loch Cé (1290.6:27-30) record that: 'Aed O'Domhnaill was deposed by his own brother, *i.e.* Toirdhelbhach O'Domhnail, who assumed the sovereignty himself through the power of his mother's kindred, *i.e.* the Clann-Domhnaill, and several other Gall-oglaech'. It may only have been after Angus Og's assumption of the Lordship around 1301, however, and their enforced exile that they were able to establish themselves as leaders of one of Ireland's foremost mercenary septs (Marsden 2001:42-56).

While the MacDonalds of Dunvaig and the Glens cannot themselves be counted amongst the Gallowglass kindred, their position as major independent landowners in Antrim saw them emerge as important power-players in 16th century Ulster (Marsden 2001:50). This did not, however, prevent their forfeiture along with the rest of the Islay MacDonalds in 1493. In the rental of 1541, the lands of 'Ardrudanis, Dunoyik, Kilcallumkill and Largbrak, Iletor, Drumcurran', extending in total to just over 9 M, are listed in the possession of the 'Captain of Dunoyok' – reflecting Crown efforts to prevent the area being used as a springboard for MacDonald uprisings. Although the castle itself and presumably the lands around it, did

[153] Angus and Alexander were the grandsons of Donald, the progenitor of the Clan Donald, who in turn was grandson of Somerled.

pass back into MacDonald hands at several points over the following 100 years, its role as a symbol of MacDonald resistance led to its eventual demolition and the dismemberment of its hinterland by the Campbells of Cawdor in the second half of the 17th century (see notes on Lagavulin in Kildalton, in Appendix I).

7.1.2.6 The area around Kintour

The concentration of G farm-names around Kintour takes in the sheltered natural harbours of Port Mor, Glas Uig and Aros Bay, and with them the strategically important southern entrance to the Sound of Islay. It can be assumed that this particular grouping corresponds to the substantial holding of 'Chantor alias Kinror' valued at £6 13s 4d in MacIan's 'Extent' of 1507. Given that the 2 ½ M land of Kenture is listed in the 1541 rental as belonging to Ane MacAne, it seems likely that it was amongst the territory acquired by John MacIan for his relatives from the MacKays of the Southward following the forfeiture of the Lordship in 1494. This would also suggest that while MacIan himself held only the central part of the sound directly, he made sure he had at least indirect control of access to it.

7.1.2.7 The area around Port Charlotte in the Rhinns

The traditional connection of the MacKays with the Rhinns is attested by the family epithet (see above). Their importance in this area is further corroborated by the presence of the mortuary house known as Hugh MacKay's grave in the graveyard on Orsay (RCAHMS 1984:256) and a series of late medieval and early modern incised grave-slabs in the graveyards at Nerabus (RCAHMS 1984:228-30). Of the lands listed in the 1541 rental, the 2 ½ M land of Glassansay, along with a holding consisting of Tochtomor, Garremore, Garrebeg, Tochtomoremissay and Gremisay and extending to 7 ½ M in total, are recorded as belonging to a Neill MacKay McCarle; with nearby Amott (16s 8d) under the control of Angus MacKy. It is doubtless significant that this area not only guards the western flank of the sheltered inner part of Loch Indaal, but also sits atop some of the best arable land on the east side of the Rhinns – factors which were certain to have weighed heavy in the siting of Port Charlotte by Frederick William Campbell in the early 19th century (see above). Even so, it seems likely that MacKay influence had waned by this point. The probability that their territory once stretched beyond this rather limited area is supported by the presence of a Gleann na Gaoidh between Easter Ellister and Octofad. While superficial analysis of this G language name suggests a meaning of 'Windy or Boggy Valley', comparison with early written forms of the surname (*eg.* Mhagaodh from 1408) points to an original **Gleann Magaodh* (Glen MacKay), perhaps marking the southern boundary of MacKay lands.

7.1.2.8 The west central coast of the Rhinns

With the exception of Tormisdale, the stretch of farm-districts from Kilchoman in the N to Ballymeny in the S are all formally G. While this area is no longer particularly well-known for the quality of its land or the safety of its harbours, it does control the bays of Kilchoman, Kilchiaran and Lossit and with them the immediate northern approach to the North Channel. Of the farm-districts named in this area, Kilchoman, with its large expanse of *machair* (shell sand soil) would have been particularly attractive to medieval

farmers. Its perceived arable value at the close of this period is attested by the extent of £6 8s 4d given in MacIan's Extent of 1507.[154] We are told in the 1722 rental that:

> Kilchomman is a choice and very large possession, having many parks and enclosures in it; wherein was once the choice mansion house of Calder in this countrie.

It may well be the case that that the Campbells had adopted this practice from their MacDonald predecessors. Whether it was the site of one of the 'two mansions' that Fordun tells us were owned by the Lords of the Isles in Islay (BI:474) is difficult to say. It would be surprising, however, if the many attractions of this area had not also been recognised and appropriated by the MacDonalds.

The 1541 rental records the lease of the ten mark land of Gilquhomane (Kilchoman) in the 'Rynnis of Islay' to sir Johne McKenerkade – a cleric who did not have a degree and was not, therefore, entitled to be called 'Master'. The extremely high value of this holding – 10 M compared to the more usual 2 ½ M – once again points to the high status of the tenant, exactly what we might expect of the hereditary fine-metal worker. The influence of the MacNokaird family in this area is further illustrated by the rental of the adjacent farm-district of Bray (Braid) to Gilcrist McNarkerde in 1541. This latter association is particularly interesting given its inclusion of or proximity to Caonis Gall, traditionally said to have been the home of the sword-smiths to the chief of Islay (*cf.* Campbell 1890:60). Although legend identifies the name of these craftsmen as Maceachern, it is possible that this is an emendation for MacNokaird (*cf.* Caldwell forthcoming).

Note should also be taken here of the historical tenants of nearby Ballinaby. In 1541, the 2 ½ M lands of Ballenab and the 6s 8d lands of Areset were held by a certain Fergus Oldowe. The possibility that the Oldowe family were the hereditary surgeons of the Lords of the Isles is supported by their name, which derives from the G *Ollamh* (m), meaning 'doctor, physician'. By the time the estate of Ballinaby had been acquired by Archibald Campbell, Lord Lorn, in 1629, however, this branch of the family had changed their name to MacBeth. Considering the entry in RGS for 10 July 1609 by which it is clear that Fergus Macbeth was the 'physician in chief' in Islay (RGS XLV:339:pp.139-43), it seems likely that the title *Ollamh* and the surname MacBeth were used interchangeably where appropriate. It is possible therefore that Fergus Oldowe and the MacBeths of Ballinaby were related to the 'Fercos MacBetha' (Fergus MacBeth) listed as the third witness to the Gaelic charter of 1408 and the Gilchrist MacVaig of the Crown charter of 1506.

7.1.2.9 Other notable connections

It is possible that either the Malcolm MacGown who appears as the tenant of Tighcargaman in the 1541 rental or the John McGow who appears in conjunction with Ardtalloch was the hereditary black-smith of the Lords of the Isles in Islay (see above); and that the John Mcintagart associated with the now defunct farm-district of Ballephersoun in the late 1620s and early 1630s represents a family of priests, perhaps

[154] This does not include the part of the 8s 4d holding of 'Kilcoman et Kilkerain', which is also listed in MacIan's Extent.

linked to the nearby chapel of Kilnaughton. Perhaps even less likely to pre-date the advent of the MacSorelys is the tenure of the Mull based MacLeans of Duart, whose lands in Islay included the particularly fertile area around Ballygrant before these passed to the Bishopric of the Isles in the late 16th century. Indeed, it has been suggested by Caldwell (2001:49) that the MacLean lands in Islay may only have been granted by John II towards the end of the 15th century, in compensation for those MacLean lost following the forfeiture of the Earldom of Ross by James IV in 1475.

In addition to this, there are indications in the charters and rentals that other Gaelic families may have been imported to Islay in the years before the Campbell take-over. In 1575, for example, when the incoming Bryce family entered into a bond of manrent with Angus MacDonald of Dunyvaig and the Glens, they were to be placed in any of his lands he pleased (MM:#110).[155]

Significantly, there are very few notable Lordship personages associated with farm-districts bearing ON or XON names. Of the few exceptions are the Fergus Oldowe discussed above, the Gillaspy MacIndewar who rented Ardtalloch in 1541 and the McArthurs who are traditionally associated with Proaig (*eg.* Charles McArthour who was tenant of Proag in 1686). While the McIndewars may have been hereditary keepers of a religious relic, there is little convincing evidence for their social status in Islay over and above their appearance in the early rentals. It seems unlikely, however, as is popularly believed that the McArthours were ever the hereditary pipers of the Lords of the Isles (Caldwell, Forthcoming).

7.1.3 Gaelic influence under the MacDonalds of Dunyvaig and the Glens

While the demise of the MacDonald Lords of the Isles was complete by 1542, when the Lordship was inalienably annexed to the Crown as one of the dignities enjoyed by the heir to the throne (Caldwell 2001:57), this period also saw the rise of the MacDonalds of Dunyvaig and the Glens. By 1545, astute political manoeuvring on the part of James MacDonald of Dunyvaig saw him 'rewarded' by the Scottish government with the Barony of Barr in Kintyre, which included lands in Islay, Jura and Colonsay. This sudden change in fortunes also saw the MacDonalds make considerable inroads into Ireland. By 1550, James MacDonald held sway over all the coastal areas of Ireland between Dunlace in the north and Belfast in the south (Caldwell 2001:59). As Caldwell (2001:59-60) points out, this dominance was based to a not insignificant extent on the MacDonald's ability to muster large armies in the Hebrides and transport them overseas at short notice (see above). It is apparent, however, that the flow of traffic between the Isles and Ireland in terms of both people and culture was by no means one-way. Before the Islay MacDonalds once again fell from royal favour in the early 17th century[156] and were supplanted by the Campbells of Cawdor as lairds of Islay, it appears that their increasingly Hibernophile leanings were

[155] The (likely) antecedence of these and several other Islay families will be covered in more detail in Caldwell's forthcoming survey of Islay family names.

[156] Although the mercenary activities of the MacDonalds in Ireland had not previously concerned the Scottish establishment, the situation changed in 1603 when James VI became king of Great Britain and Ireland. As the fiercely Gaelic MacDonalds had by this point also fallen out with their powerful anglophile neighbours, the Campbell Earls of Argyll, their subsequent demise was not entirely unexpected (*cf.* Caldwell 2001:62).

causing umbrage amongst the locals. At some point between October 1612 and November 1614, the Privy Council acted on a petition to the effect that Sir Ronald MacSorley[157] and his officers did:

> [...] subject his Mahesteis tennentis [in Islay] to the formes and lawis of Yreland, and to compel thame to persew and defend in all thair actionis and causis according to the forme and custome of Yreland; quhilk is a matter of verie grite greif unto thame that thay, being his majesties native borne subjectis, should be rewlit and governit be foreyne and strange lawes. (RPC X:13-14)

7.1.4 Gaelic influx under the Campbells of Cawdor

Following the full-scale rebellion of 1614, led by Sir James MacDonald's younger brother Angus and his distant relative Coll *Ciotach* (G 'the left-handed') MacGillespie, both the island and the task of suppressing MacDonald interests were secured for Sir John Campbell of Cawdor by his brother Archibald Campbell, the 7th Earl of Argyll (*cf.* Storrie 1997:52-3; Caldwell 2001:61-3).

While the Campbells of Cawdor took several direct steps to minimise MacDonald support in Islay, the process was to last many decades. Bonds of obedience were extracted from the chiefs of the MacKays, Macbraynes and MacFarquhars for this purpose in 1618 (BC:242-3), the castle in Loch Gorm garrisoned, the former MacDonald power centres of Kilchoman and Finalggan rented to John's brothers Colin of Ardersier and George, later of Airds (*cf.* Caldwell, forthcoming); and the estates around Dunyvaig in Kildalton were restructured (*cf.* Appendix I). To begin with, however, Campbell enthusiasm for Lowland ideals at the expense of local tradition achieved little more than to breed resentment amongst the population at large.

During the Civil War, for example, George Campbell complained of difficulty getting Islay men to serve with him in Ireland (BC:288), when it is known that many of them fought alongside Sir Phelim O'Neill – no doubt with the express intention of fighting the Campbell-backed covenanting force (BC:288). At the same time, Dunyvaig castle was captured and held by Coll Ciotach on behalf of the MacDonalds (Turner 1829:45-46); the local minister, Martin MacLachlan of Kildalton, was forced to flee and his counterpart in the N and W parts of the island, John MacAlaster, reported that his own congregation had also sided entirely with the rebels (MSA 1639-1651:121-23).

While he was in Ireland, George Campbell left control of his Islay lands in the hands of his wife, Janet. Continuing resentment between the Campbells and the MacDonalds during this period is borne out by a story recorded in the *History of the Campbells of Craignish.* According to the Craignish historian, Janet, also known as 'the wicked woman of Dunstaffnage', made a practice of seizing followers of the MacDonalds in the night, binding them hand and foot and transporting them to deserted rocks and islands where they were left to die (SHSM IV:248-9; BC:286-8). While the story has no doubt been exaggerated, it can hardly be doubted, as Caldwell (forthcoming) points out, that its central theme of the forcible eviction of MacDonald supporters by Campbells is based in reality. By 1629, when John Campbell of Knockrinsale finally sold out to the Campbells of Cawdor, there were no senior members of the Clan

[157] Ronald was the son of Sorley Buy MacDonald, nephew of James MacDonald of Dunyvaig and 1st Earl of Antrim.

Donald left in Islay. With their powerful patrons gone, it was only a matter of time before the ordinary tenants were also displaced.

It must also be noted in this respect that Islay was left devastated by the Civil War and its aftermath (*cf.* Caldwell forthcoming). Such was the loss of revenue suffered by the Campbells as a direct result of the wasting and destruction of their lands by the rebels, that an Act of Parliament was passed in 1647 relieving the Laird of Cawdor from paying Crown dues for the previous and the coming three years (APS VI, i:801-2; VI, ii:317). In 1651, for example, only £2216 10s 2d was forthcoming from the estates of Islay and Muckairn in mainland Argyll, whereas in previous years the two had produced in excess of £20,000 (McKerral 1948:77). It might perhaps be cynical to suggest that much of this damage had been engineered by the Campbells to further destabilise their MacDonald rivals. Whatever the case, they were certainly not slow to exploit the situation. By the late 17th century, over a third of the island was in the hands of Campbell tacksmen with the rest being let directly by the laird to groups of smaller tenants (Caldwell 2001:64).

It must be wondered whether the intensity of ill-feeling and inevitable social dichotomisation which persisted between the Campbells and the more established islanders even to this date might be compared with that proposed for the Norse take-over some 800 years earlier. It is likely to have been against this kind of background that Cawdor and many of his tacksmen imported tenants and farm labourers from the Campbell estates in Nairnshire (*cf.* Caldwell forthcoming). If so, the Campbell plantation of Islay is bound to have had a significant impact on the island's place-names.

It is clear from the documentary records that this change did not extend to the traditional names of Islay's farm-districts. But then, neither should we expect this. By the 17th century, technical legitimacy in land-holding lay in the documented transfer of ownership or tenancy rather than force of arms alone. As a result, the period is characterised by the wholesale adoption of pre-existing designations for fiscal units.[158] When it comes to the names of the subordinate settlements and minor topographical features on Campbell estates, we can expect the politically motivated resettlement of large parts of the island to have brought about a certain amount of change. According to Olsen's User-Group theory, the ostracisation or expulsion of local place-name user-groups would have created an onomastic vacuum which the incomers would then have had to fill. As many of the Campbell settlers were Gaelic speaking, this may have led to a substantial shift in place-name demographics. But while both Norse and Gaelic names may have been forgotten or replaced with Gaelic or English neologisms, no new coinages would have been made in Norse – thus eroding the proportion of Norse names (see below).

[158] There are a few notable exceptions to this rule, such as followed the deliberate dismemberment of the old farm-district of Dunyvaig (see Appendix I).

7.1.5 Further erosion of the Norse nomenclature under the Shawfield Campbells

By 1726, a combination of poor financial planning, failed harvests and general bad luck had combined to leave the absentee Cawdor Campbell lairds on the verge of bankruptcy and so desperate for ready cash that the sale of the Islay estate was inevitable (*cf.* Storrie 1997:55-69). The purchaser, Daniel Campbell of Shawfield, was renowned as an agricultural improver – an ethos carried on by his immediate successors – his grandson Daniel Campbell the younger, Walter Campbell of Sunderland and Walter Frederick Campbell (*cf.* Ramsay 1991; Storrie 1997:65-140; Caldwell 2001:75-89). As economic emphases changed, populations expanded and settlement in general was reorganised, there is a strong possibility that the surviving Norse nomenclature was yet further eroded.

Developments during the Shawfield Campbell period can be seen as a sharp intensification of pre-existing trends. Changes in place-name demographics are likely to have varied, however, with varying levels of economic growth in different parts of the island. The degree of change will have been determined partly by the basic economic potential of each parish, but also by the degree to which this was exploited by the local land-holders and the effects this had on population size and distribution. As late as the 1790s, for example, the Rev. Archibald Robertson, minister of Kildalton, felt moved to berate the backward agricultural practises of his parishioners. In his report to John Sinclair, the compiler of the *Statistical Account of Scotland*, he bemoans the general lack of roads and their poor state of repair – which might otherwise allow for the more effective transport and use of manure (Sinclair 1983:397) – and the noticeable lack of enclosures – which might otherwise provide protection from the wind and animals (*ibid.*:397-8). This can be contrasted with the general optimism of his counterpart in Kilchoman parish, the Rev. John McLeish. According to McLeish:

> None of the Western Isles can boast of such good roads and bridges as Islay. The inhabitants are every year called out to work upon them; and any gentleman may drive for 30 miles through the isle in his carriage. (*ibid.*:392)

He then goes on to tell us that:

> within these dozen of years, the present proprietor [Daniel Campbell the younger] has more than doubled his rents; yet his tenantry, as well as himself, are better off than ever. They have given him, as it were, an addition to his estate, by reducing many acres of moor and moss, from a state of nature, and bringing them to yield good crops of corn and grass (*ibid.*:394).

As a result, it is perhaps not that surprising that Kildalton shows a higher proportion of ONX and ON names than Kilmeny, even when both are known to have been home to powerful G speaking families in the later Middle Ages and early Modern periods.

7.2 Place-name hierarchies and chronologies

While the apparent correlation of Gaelic farm-names with post-Norse, Gaelic power centres is interesting, it cannot be taken as evidence of post-Norse, Gaelic innovation in naming traditions without further corroboration. One way to gauge the relative age of settlement-names is by extra-linguistic analysis. As we saw in Chapter 4, the techniques of extra-linguistic dating have been used with a reasonable amount of success in establishing place-name hierarchies and to a lesser extent chronologies in Norway, the Faroes, the Scottish islands and elsewhere.

At first glance, the results from the Islay material were rather less clear-cut. In fact, in order to pick out any difference between the characteristics of farms with ON, ONX, All G and G names at all, it was necessary to work to 2 decimal places. The apparent precision of these figures should not, however, be taken as an indication of their accuracy. As was made clear in Chapters 4 and 6, certain aspects of non-linguistic assessment are unavoidably subjective and subject, therefore, to error or misinterpretation. It is possible, for example, that mean averages have been distorted by unrepresentative data. It was nevertheless thought preferable to proceed with these figures rather than work around the more serious methodological issues presented by Olson's verbal quantifications (Chapter 6).

On so doing, several patterns were observed. While a significantly higher number of farm-districts with ON names were 'land-locked' than their G named counterparts (59% as opposed to 44%), by far the highest proportion of 'coastal' holdings (88%) was found amongst farm-districts with ONX names. Although farm-districts with ON names were also on average slightly higher in the landscape than their G named counterparts (58m as opposed to 52m), those with ONX names were by far the closest to sea-level (36m).

While farm-districts with G names were only marginally better in terms of 'Land Quality' than those with ON and ONX names (4.79 on a scale of 1-7 as opposed to 4.73), they had a considerably higher mode average (7 compared to 3 for all other name-types) – suggesting a G-speaking monopoly on the absolute best arable land. Farm-districts with ON names were also marginally less desirable than their G counterparts when it came to 'Relative Favourability'. While farm-districts with ON names did have a slightly lower mode value than all other name-types (3 as opposed to 4), this must be balanced against the slightly higher percentage of ON farm-names falling within the middle category than their G counterparts (38% as opposed to 34%). Farm-districts with ONX names, on the other hand, were noticeably worse in terms of both Land Quality (4.68) than those with either G (4.79) or ON names (4.75).

When it came to 'Relative Size', both the mean and mode averages of farms with ON names (3.05 and 4 on scales of 1 to 5) were noticeably higher than their G counterparts (2.66 and 2), with a significantly higher percentage of ON farms falling within the top two 'Relative Size' categories (51% as opposed to 32%).

A final point of interest here is that more farm-districts with ON+ONX names boast IAFs than those with G names. This is in stark contrast to Nieke's (1983:313) claim that Norse settlers avoided Iron Age fortifications. Given the limited amount of excavation at Islay's suspected IAFs, it is not currently possible to say whether the Norse incmoers did in fact build their homes directly on top of previously fortified sites.[159] But even if they did not, this would be easier to to explain in terms of logistics than the survival of an independent G warrior aristocracy. Although Islay's IAFs are unlikely to have existed completely independently from systems of land and territorial division, analysis of their location relative to the boundaries on MacDougall's map suggests that they were sited in liminal places – usually on or near the border with other territories (Chapter 8). As these areas are often removed from the best quality arable land in any given farm-district, it would probably have been more convenient for the Norse incomers to ignore them than re-use or dismantle them. Indeed, once the native aristocracy had been swept aside, these are places which might quickly have developed taboo status.

[159] *cf.* Sharples & Parker Pearson's (1999:58) observation on the 'puzzling absence of Norse settlement on the broch sites of the Western Isles'.

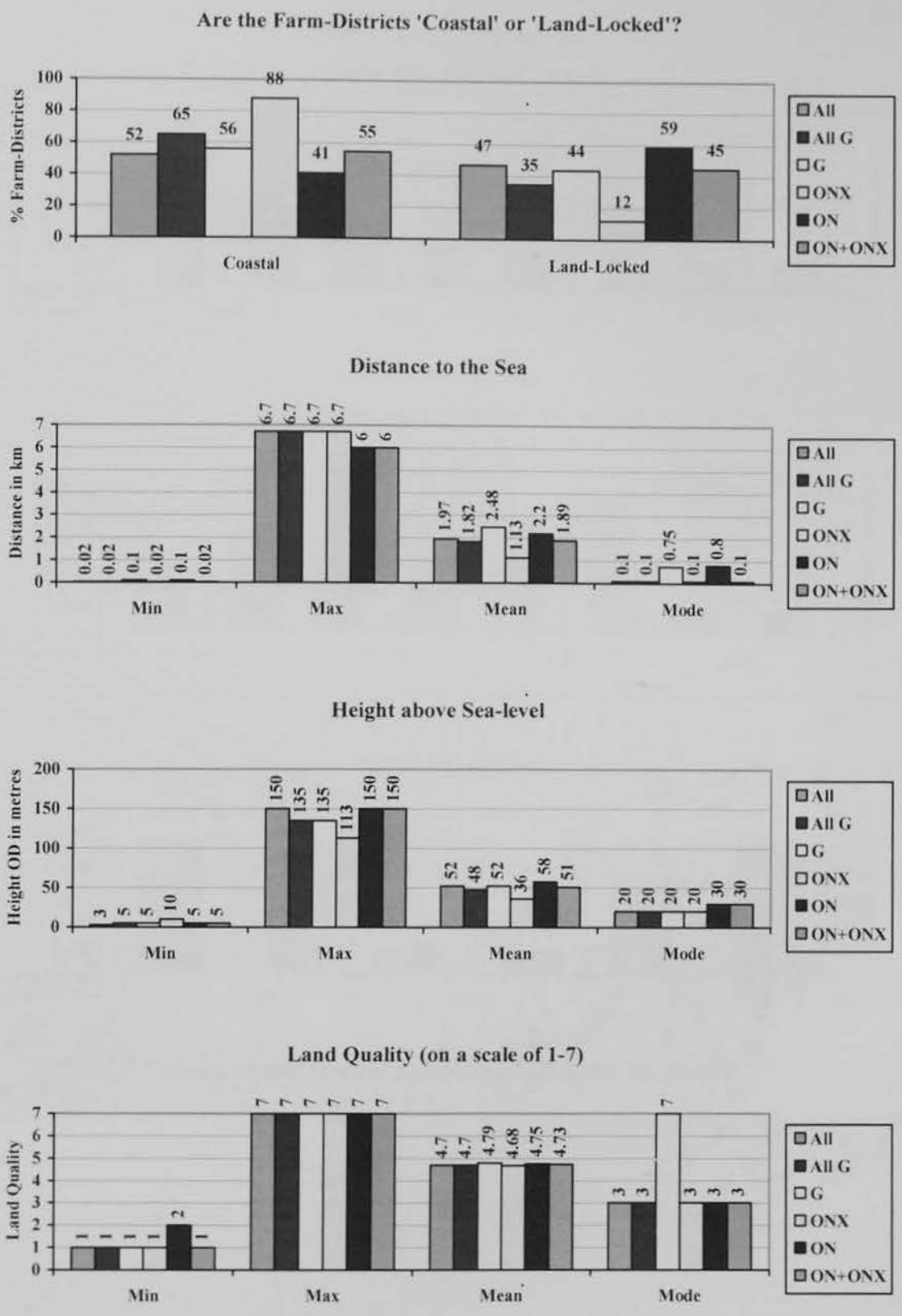


Figure 22: Statistical analysis of extra-linguistic data I

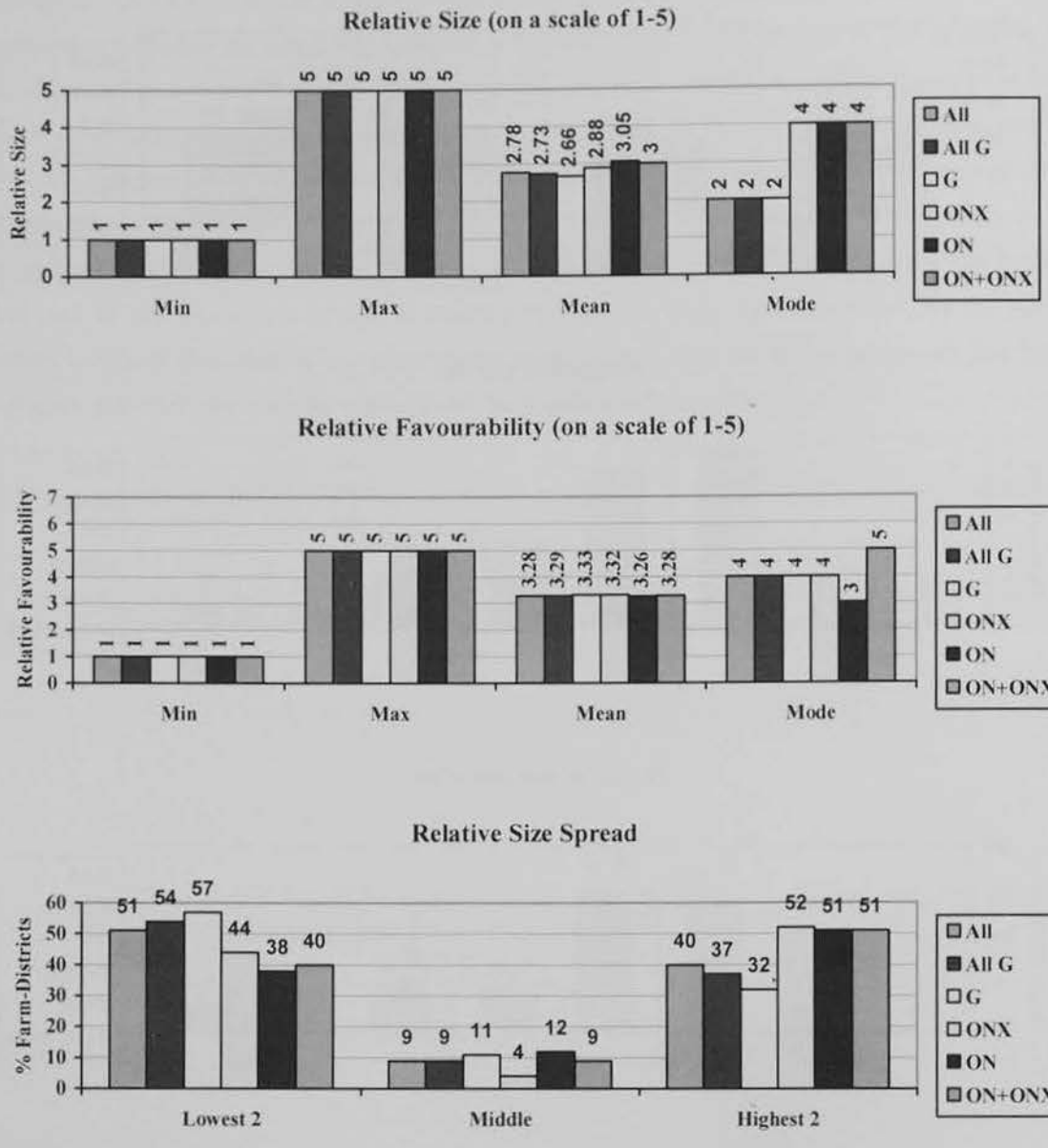
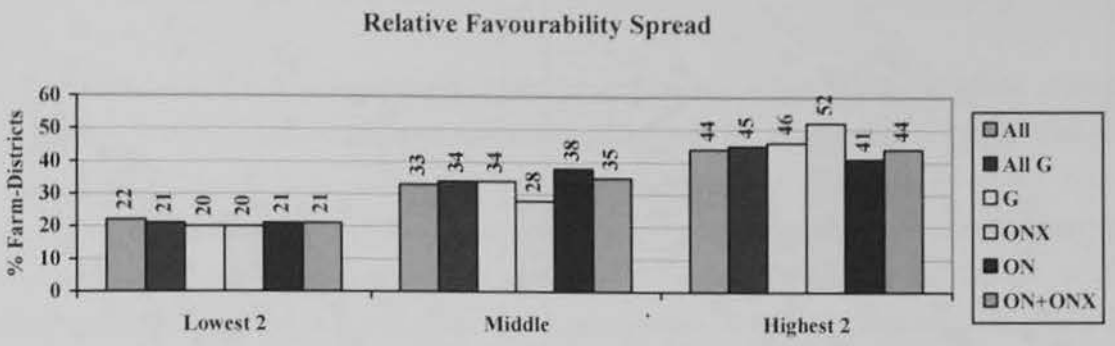
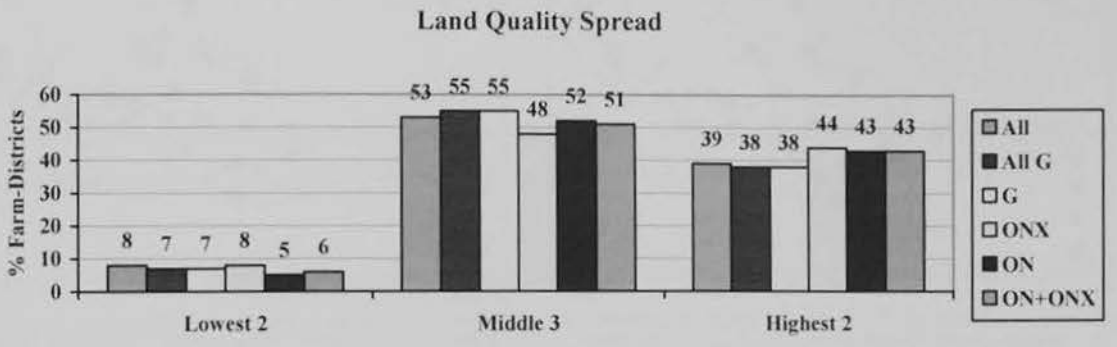
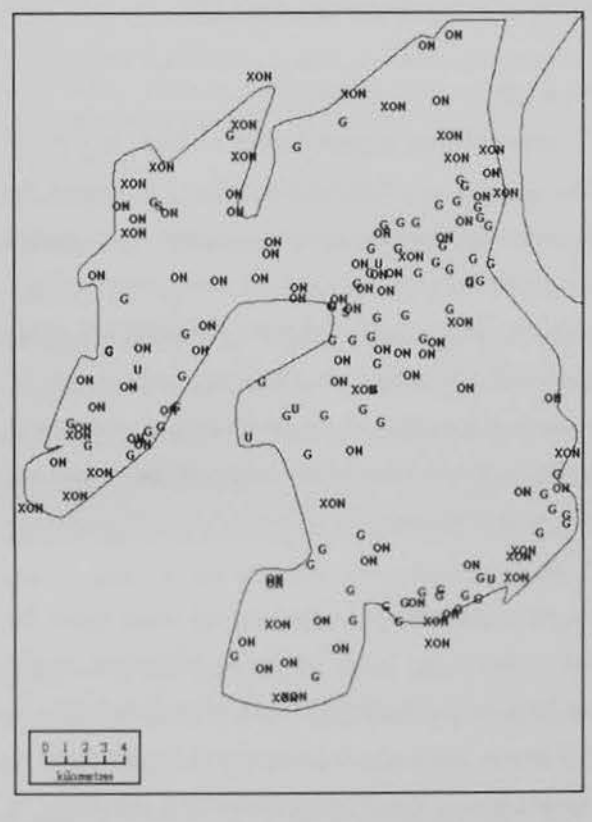


Figure 23: Statistical analysis of extra-linguistic data II





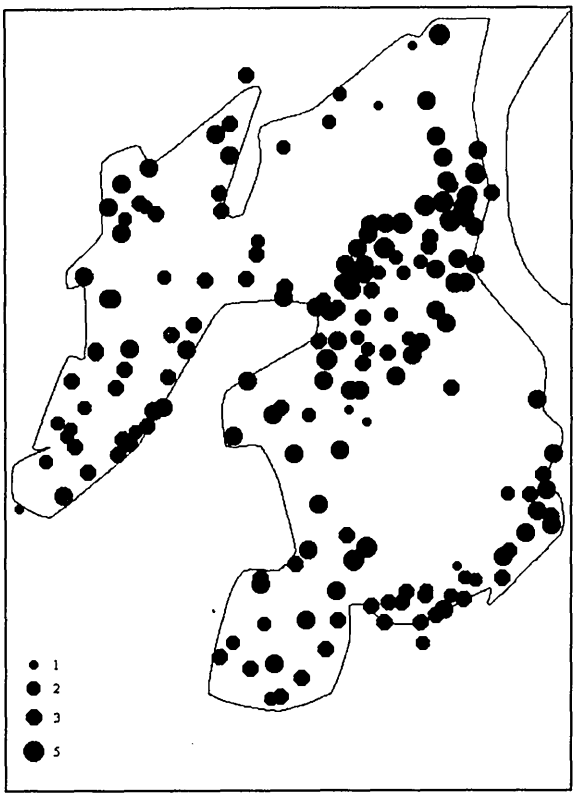


Broad linguistic categorisation of farm-district names

Land Quality: Ranges from 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest)

Figure 24: Statistical analysis of extra-linguistic data III)

'Relative Size': Ranges from 1 (smallest) to 5 (largest)



'Relative Favourability': Ranges from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest)

Figure 24b: Statistical analysis of extra-linguistic data IV)

A number of possible conclusions can be drawn from this data:

1. Although a higher number of farm-districts with G names had the highest quality of land (*ie.* a mode value of 7), G farm-names were also noticeably smaller in terms of 'Relative Size'. One explanation for this is that large areas of high quality land were appropriated by incoming Gaels in the post-Norse period and subject to sub-division during the Gaelic cultural renaissance of the MacSorley era, resulting in a proliferation of smaller farms on good soil with formally G names. The fact that the surviving ON farm-names have a lower mode average quality of land may or may not indicate that they were passed over by the incoming G nobility. There can be little doubt, however, that this arable disadvantage would have reduced their capacity for future expansion, explaining perhaps why some of the larger ON farms had not been replaced by a proliferation of smaller farm-districts with G names.

2. The fact that the surviving ON settlement names are concentrated in land-locked areas could be interpreted in two different ways: either that the main consideration of Norse settlers was sheltered, arable land as opposed to coastal areas (*cf.* Chapter 6); or that later medieval Gaelic magnates preferred to have their primary residence in coastal areas. In either case, it proves that Norse settlement was not restricted to defensive, coastal enclaves, but on the contrary, extended across every type of inhabited land-form in Islay. Norse possession of inland areas suggests that the incoming Norsemen were also powerful enough

to suppress the Gaelic-speaking inhabitants of coastal areas and that some of the coastal G farm-names are in fact replacements for earlier ON names.

3. The proliferation of ONX names in coastal areas appears puzzling at first. If the distribution of these names is taken in context, however, it soon becomes clear that they are, in general, restricted to areas on the peripheries of the post-Norse, Gaelic prestige centres outlined above. That these late, ONX farm-names flank known centres of G influence in the post-Norse period suggests that many of the 'central' G names are themselves late – *ie.* while the physical presence of Gaelic magnates and their followers led to the direct gaelicisation of their own immediate spheres of influence, the partial Gaelicisation of names in the adjacent areas, shows how this influence spread.

***

A certain degree of corroboration for these conclusions was found in the subdivision of ON+ONX and All G settlement names into topographic and habitative groupings.

While place-names containing topographic generics have been dismissed by certain authors as impossible to date (Chapter 4), this claim is about as justified as the assertion made by some of the same authors that only place-names containing habitative generics can denote settlement. According to Nicolaisen's (2001:122-4) assessment of the ON generic *dalr*, for example:

> [t]here is no reason to think that it has ever meant anything but what it still means in Norwegian today, *i.e.* 'a valley' [with its distribution therefore serving] as a reminder that 'settlement area' and "sphere of influence" are not the same.[160]

As was seen in Chapter 4, however, it is clear from the historical record that this was not the case in other Scandinavian settlement areas. Of the 36 initial Icelandic settlements listed in *Landnámabók*, for example, 17 have topographical generics – either as a simplex (6) or, more frequently, as part of a compound (11) (Olsen 1928:67). It is also clear from extra linguistic analysis of Norwegian, Faroese and Orcadian farm-names that topographic generics generally and simplex topographic generics in particular are usually amongst the most prestigious and potentially, therefore, the oldest in their respective localities (*cf.* Kruse 2004:104-9).

The reasons for this are fairly straightforward. On coming to a new area, settlers might name the first settlement after its most prominent natural feature – hence simplex names like ON **Gil* 'ravine' in Kildalton. It has been argued by A. Kruse (pers. comm.) that compounds consisting of personal name + topographic generic might also belong to this early phase in a Norse colonial context. Only after the landscape had been divided amongst these simplex (and possibly compound) *denotata* would it have been absolutely necessary to make a distinction between different examples of the same type of feature, hence

[160] Nicolaisen has since conceded that nature names can come into existence to denote settlement, rather than become transferred to settlements after first of all being coined to denote a topographic feature (see, for example, Nicolaisen 1977-80:112).

ON **Eika(r)dalr* in Kildalton, instead of simplex ON **Dalr* in Kilarrow. Once this selection of names had been exhausted, if not earlier, there would then be a need to make even finer distinctions between settlements – hence habitative generics, different specifics and so on.

As a class then, independent constructs with topographic generics can be presumed to be early. But how does this affect our understanding of Islay farm-names?

ON Generics	ON+ Xdif	ONX		ON+ONX		Gen	Cult	Nat	G Generics	G+ Xdif		ONX		GX		G+GX		All G		Gen	Cult	Nat	S Generics	S+ Xdif		S	Gen	Cult
		All	CP?	All	No CP					All	CP?	All	CP?	All	CP?	All	CP?	All	No CP					All	CP?			
bólstaðr (m)	17	1		18	18	1	1		*baile* (m)	17	1	1				16	1	17	16	1	1		*glebe*	1		1	1	1
dalr (m)	6	5	1	11	10	1		1	*cill* (f)	13		1		4	2	16	2	17	15	1	1		*pendicle*	1		1		1
staðir (m. pl.)	8	3	1	11	10	1	1		*àird* (f)	11		6				5		11	11	1		1	**GX**	5	2	0		
vik (f)	3	3	1	6	5	1		1	**ONX**	7	3	7	3					7	4				**ONX**	6	3	0		
land (n)	3	1		4	4	1	1		*àuridh* (f)	4						4		4	4	1	1		**Subtotals C**	13		**2**	1	2
á (f)	1	3	1	4	3	1		1	*eilean* (m)	4		3				1		4	4	1		1						
nes (n)	1	2	1	3	2	1		1	*ceann* (m)	3						3		3	3	1		1	**Uncertain Place-Names**					
býr (m)	2	1		3	3	1	1		*gart* (m)	3						3		3	3	1	1		ON Generics		*G Generics*			
nef (n)		3		3	3	1		1	*ochdamh* (adj)	3						3		3	3	1	1		*á* (f)	1	*lag* (m)	2		
ey (f)		2		2	2	1		1	*tigh* (m)	3						3		3	3	1	1		*ærgi* (n)	1	*leac* (f)	2		
fjörðr (m)	2			2	2	1		1	*ach**	2		1				1		2	2				*akr* (m)	1	*corr* (f)	1		
kúla (f)	2			2	2	1		1	*abhainn* (f)	2		1				1		2	2	1		1	*gerði* (n)	1	*geàrraidh* (m)	1		
lækr (m)	2			2	2	1		1	*càrn* (m)	2						2		2	2	1	1		*lækr* (m)	2	*achadh* (m)	1		
sker (n)	1	1		2	2	1		1	*cnoc* (m)	2		1				1		2	2	1		1	*búð* (n)	1				
setr (n)		2	1	2	1	1	1		*creag* (f)	2						2		2	2	1		1	- Joined names	-1				-1
á(r)mót/ mót (n)	1			1	1	1		1	*faiche* (f)	2						2		2	2	1	1		**Subtotals D**	6				6
barð (n)	1			1	1	1		1	*gleann*(m)	2		2		1		1		2	2	1		1						
fjall (n)	1			1	1	1		1	*losaid* (f)	2						2		2	2	1		1						
gil (n)	1			1	1	1		1	*port* (m)	2		1				1		2	2	1		1						
haugr (m)		1		1	1	1		1	*achadh* (m)	1						1		1	1	1	1							
leiti (n)	1			1	1	1		1	*bràighe* (m)	1						1		1	1	1		1						
múli (m)	1			1	1	1		1	*claigeann* (m)	1						1		1	1	1	1							
pollr (m)	1			1	1	1		1	*currach* (m) ?	1						1		1	1	1	1							
steinar (m. pl.)	1			1	1	1		1	*goirtean*(m)	1						1		1	1	1	1							
völlr (m)	1			1	1	1		1	*gort* (m)	1						1		1	1	1	1							
akr (m)		1		1	1	1	1		*lag* (m)	1						1		1	1	1		1						
borg (f)	1			1	1	1	1		*machair* (f)	1						1		1	1	1		1						
garðr (m)	1			1	1	1	1		*maol* (m)	1						1		1	1	1		1						
heimr (m)	1			1	1	1	1		*muileann* (m)	1						1		1	1	1	1							
þing (n)	1			1	1	1	1		*ros* (m)	1						1		1	1	1		1						
tún (n)	1			1	1	1	1		*tir* (m)	1						1		1	1	1	1							
Xdif	0			0	0				*tôrr* (m)	1						1		1	1	1		1						
Subtotals A	62	29	**6**	91	85	31	11	20		99	4	24	**3**	5	2	80	3	103	97	30	15	15						
- Joined names	-2			-2					- Glenastels					-1		-1							**Total (ON+ONX) + (G+GX) - CP =**					
ON Uncertain		1		1																			**(61+30) + (75+4) - 9 = 161**					
No generic?	1			1																								
Subtotals B	**61**	30	**24**	91	**85**	31	11	20		99	**95**	24	**21**	4	**2**	79	**76**	103	**97**	30	15	15						

NB 1: **Xdif** = Place-names containing an *ex nomine* onomastic unit from a different language background; **CP** = Contrasted pair(s) (see above).

NB 2: Place-names consisting of modifier / Xdif / modifier are registered twice. First in the appropriate section for their formal language background as ONX or GX, with the reconstructed generic in the *ex nomine* onomastic unit then being registered in the section appropriate to its own language background

NB 3: G *ach* is strictly speaking a suffix and not a generic.

Figure 25: ON & G generics in the farm-names on MacDougall's Map

Of the 31 certain ON generics on MacDougall's map denoting settlement, 11 (35%) are cultural and 20 (65%) are topographic. Between them, these 20 topographic generics account for more than one half (*c.* 52%) of all ON+ONX settlement-names. Of the 30 G generics, 15 (50%) are topographic and 15 (50%) cultural.[161] In total, topographic generics account for about 37% of 'All G' farm-names. This difference suggests that a higher percentage of the surviving ON farm-names could potentially occupy an earlier place in the ON nomenclature than is true of their G counterparts in the G nomenclature. It should be noted, however, that just under 39% of farms with G topographic generics (14/36) also contain an ON *ex nomine* onomastic unit, compared with just over 5% of G cultural generics (3/55). This means that only 24, or roughly one quarter, of 'All G' farm-names on MacDougall's map can be considered potentially early on these particular onomastic grounds. Of these names, the only simplex examples are Carn, Brade and Lossit in Kilchoman and Lossit and possibly Carnbeg in Kilmeny parish – most of which lie in fairly central parts of the various areas of known post-Norse Gaelic influence outlined above.

While the relatively low proportion of G topographic generics in Islay settlement names could point to a well-established G nomenclature, where the sub-division of ancient estates with topographic names has led to a proliferation of cultural names, it might, alternatively, suggest that the earliest G *strata* – *ie.* those pre-dating the Viking Age – had been replaced by an ON nomenclature and that what the mid 18th century distribution of G farm-district-names with topographic generics actually represents is the re-establishment of a G nomenclature in the later Middle Ages – when the inspirational emphasis would have been on habitative names. It is surely significant in this respect that an exceptionally high proportion of the settlement names which we might expect to be amongst the earliest – *eg.* those with topographic generics, on, near or visible from the coast – contain an ON *ex nomine* onomastic unit. Of the 105 All G names shown on MacDougall's map, *c.* 24% contain an ON *ex nomine* onomastic unit. But among settlement-names beginning with *port* the figure is 50%, *àird* 55%, *eilean* 75% and *Gleann* 100%. Given that the figure for *àird* is based on 11 examples, it must be wondered whether a number of the remaining *àird*-names, are not in fact translations of ON predecessors (see notes on Ardbeg, Ardmore and Ardmeinach, all in Kildalton, in Appendix I).

7.3 More specific patterns in time?

While extra linguistic analysis has been moderately useful in identifying island-wide patterns in the nomenclature, it has not been quite so helpful in establishing hierarchical or chronological relationships within localised groups of settlement names. At first glance, this compares very negatively with similar studies of settlement development in other parts of *Scotia Scandinavica*.[162] Studies of Orkney by Marwick (1952) and Thomson (1987, 1995) and of the Mull group of Islands by Johnston (1990, 1995) have revealed fairly clear socio-economic relationships between the individual settlements and thereby place-

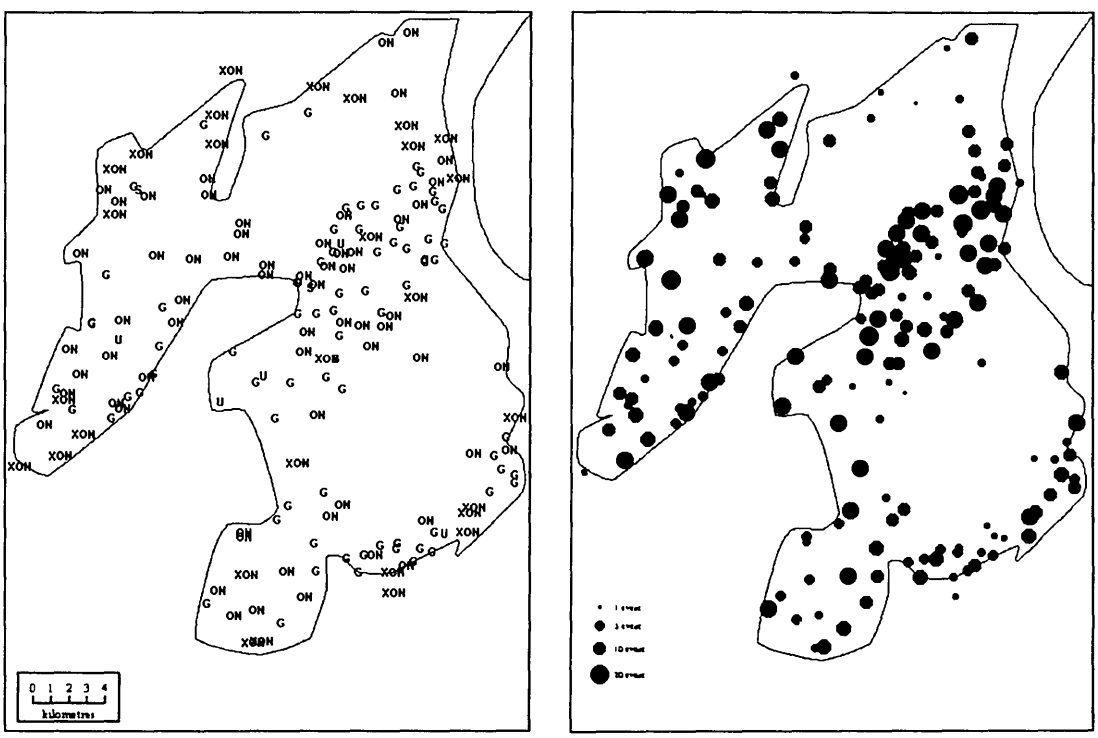
[161] The G locative suffix *ach* (see Appendix I) is found in two etymologically certain names, one of which, Eachvarnach in Kilmeny, is an independent G construct and the other, Storakaig in Kilmeny, contains an ON *ex nomine* onomastic unit.

[162] The term *Scotia Scandinavica* was coined by Nicolaisen (1994:31) to denote the area including 'the island groups to the north and west of the country and the adjacent mainland' whose Scandinavian place-names are thought to derive from Norse settlement in the early part of the Viking Age. This group is generally contrasted with SW and SE Scotland, where the Scandinavian place-names can be traced to 'secondary migration from the North of England or from Ireland' (1994:31).

name generics in given localities. With few exceptions, these appear to conform to the evolutionary model of settlement development discussed in Chapter 4 – *ie.* the presence of one (or more) central, nodal point(s) with settlements becoming increasingly marginal as they move away from the fertile coastal areas and inland and uphill into its hinterland. It comes as something of a surprise, therefore, that this kind of patternisation is largely absent from Islay as represented by the farm-districts on MacDougall's map.

Although there is substantial variation in 'land quality' and 'overall favourability' across the island as a whole, this is not always the case on a local level. In fact, as can be seen from figure 24 above, the transition between areas of high and low favourability is in general fairly smooth, with only a few areas presenting the kind of patternisation which might potentially point to different phases of settlement development.

The difficulties with the Islay material in this respect can be illustrated by multiplying 'Relative Favourability' by 'Relative Size'. While this can hardly be considered objective or even statistically orthodox practise, it does serve to exaggerate the differences between adjacent farm-districts, thus increasing the visibility of any patternisation (Figure 26).



Broad linguistic categorisation of farm-district names

'Size' multiplied by 'Relative favourability': Ranges from 1 (lowest) to 20 (highest)

Figure 26: 'Relative Size' multiplied by 'Relative Favourability'

But even so it is very difficult, without further information, to pick out any certain hierarchical relationships in the distribution pattern. There are a few places where this seems likely – *eg.* around

Nerabus in Kilchoman and Kildalton in Kildalton. Without further data on traditional territorial and administrative divisions, however, we cannot be certain that these relationships are not more apparent than real.

From a conceptual point of view, it is a matter of some concern that these Islay results differ so radically from those achieved for Orkney, Shetland and the Faroes. On closer examination, however, it seems that the main reason for this aberration lies in the nature of the Islay source material.

The rentals and charters for the Northern Isles contain at least some information on almost every individual cluster of dwellings in almost every given locality – from the largest and best equipped Earldom estate centre, to the smallest of crofts. As a result, the use of this data in the assessment of relative favourability leads inevitably to a degree of differentiation, which, in turn, paints a fairly clear picture of economic and social hierarchies in the landscape. As was seen in Chapter 4, however, the Islay rentals and their 'extents' do not necessarily represent individual settlements, but as many as half a dozen or more separate clusters of habitations, all of which have been included under the head-name of the farm-district. Unless the names and fiscal details of all of these subordinate settlements are known for one given point in time before the Agrarian revolution – which they are not – a large part of the settlement pattern and the socio-economic differentiation within it will not be visible and cannot therefore be objectively assessed. In other words, the appearance of relative economic uniformity in the Islay settlement landscape is not necessarily an accurate reflection of the historical situation. Unfortunately, it is difficult if not impossible to pick out meaningful hierarchies in this landscape through the basic techniques of non-linguistic analysis alone. As a result, supplementary data must therefore be sought to help determine the social and chronological relationships between the ON and Gaelic place-name material.

7.3.1 Linguistic dating

In his study of the place-names in the Carloway Registry area in Lewis, Richard Cox (2002:111-24) makes a number of suggestions as to how G names might be dated on the basis of internal, linguistic criteria. According to Cox (2002:113), non-generic names of the type *Maoilean* '(the) exposed place' are unlikely to post-date *c.* AD 1200 (*cf.* Watson 1906:360); simpler structures, such as *An Aird Fhraoich* 'the heathery heathland', are more likely to be early than more complex examples such as *Loch Leum an Aighe* 'the lake of the leap of the heifer' (Cox 2002:113); names in singular are potentially early (*loc. cit*);[163] and prepositional names, such as *Eadar Dhà Loch* 'between two lochs' are 'conceivably very old' (*ibid.*114).

Cox also argues that gender anomaly, such as we find in *An Dùn* 'the fort', suggests a date from the 10th century after the loss of the neuter gender (*ibid.*:115; Thurneysen 1975:154); that certain oblique case-

[163] According to Cox, only 4 names of this type in his study area contain ON loanwords and therefore undoubtedly post-Norse (2002:113).

forms in obsolete names preserved as *ex nomine* onomastic units may point to a specific *terminus post* or *ante quem*;[164] and that operation of lenition on the first phoneme of a masculine specific in a G generic-specific construct is likely to have come about through analogy with radical *mac* formations from the early 12th century onwards (*op. cit.*:117).[165]

But while Cox' linguistic considerations might provide corroboration for a name being early or late, they cannot be taken as proof in their own right of the age of a given name. Although the presence of lenition in a compound place-name, for example, might suggest that the name is late, it should be remembered that place-names are also usually affected by general linguistic developments. So, even if a name was coined without lenition, there is a strong possibility that lenition would be added at a later stage after that particular development had become commonplace. On a similar note, there is always scope for anomaly and local variation. As a result, Cox himself is forced to concede that 'none of [the Gaelic names in the Carloway Registry area] can be shown without doubt [on internal linguistic grounds] to be pre-Norse' (2002:118).

Similar problems are encountered with the ON material. Despite the lack of evidence for language use and linguistic development in the Hebrides during the Norse period, claims have been made by Cox (1991) and Oftedal (1962) that certain phonological features of ON loan-words and place-names in the Gaelic of the Long Island can be used to help date when that word material was borrowed. The presence of the diphthong [ai], for example, was taken to indicate borrowings made as early as the 8th century, when it is believed to have been raised in classical Old Norse into [ei] or [æi].

While it is reasonable to suggest that G *aoidh*, 'ford, isthmus', was borrowed from ON **aið* – as opposed to standardised ON *eið* (Cox 1991:485 – and that the specific element in the Benbecula hill-name [sdāiN' əvaL] derives ultimately from ON **stainn* rather than ON *steinn* 'stone' (Oftedal 1962:48), it should also be noted that the diphthong [ai] is still common in various Norwegian dialects today. As a consequence, its presence Hebridean place-names may be indicative of nothing more than where in Norway the settlers came from (Kruse Forthcoming:159-160).

Although similar caution must be shown with the Islay nomenclature, the use of these kinds of observations as general guidelines is instructive.

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[164] Cox (2002:116) gives the example of the *ex nomine* onomastic unit **Sloghiadh*, which 'by virtue of its ending with /i/ instead of /iç/ is likely to pre-date the 13th century when unstressed /ɣ'/ > /x'/' (*cf.* O'Rahilly 1976:53-7).

[165] There is evidence for this development in the 12th century Gaelic notes in the Book of Deer (Cox 2002:117; Jackson 1972:141, 27d). According to Cox (2002:123), 'The non-lenition of [the] *ex-nomine* onomastic units and the location of *Airigh Brocaig* and ?*Airigh Tuartain* sets the development before *c.* 1200'.

Of the 97 non-contrasted G farm-names shown on MacDougall's map, none are of the 'concievably very old' prepositional type outlined by Cox (2002:114). There are 6 examples of the simplest name-type – Brade, Carn and Lossit in Kilchoman, Lossit in Kilmeny and Claggain and Machrie in Kildalton – and a further one example of the non-generic type – Eacharnach Kilmeny – which could potentially be early.[166] It must be significant, however, that almost all of these are bordered by two or more Norse-named farm-districts and that most of them contain nature names derived from ON coinages. Both of the Lossit, for example, have nomenclature pointing to the previous existence of an ON **Borga(r)vik*, 'bay of the fort' and therefore of a Norse language user-group.

By way of contrast, more than a fifth of the 97 non-contrasted examples contain an ON *ex nomine* onomastic unit and must therefore be classified as post-Norse. Of the remaining 76 examples, more than four fifths were of the phrasal type considered by Watson (1904:xl-xli) to be late. While names of this type are known to have been in use since at least the late 11th century – when they appear in the Book of Deer (Watson 1904:xli) – we might expect the influence of Gaelic in Islay to have been growing for several generations by this point. Indeed, it could be significant here that a number of other areas where the G nomenclature is comprised largely of names of the phrasal type, such as Skye and Lewis (*loc. cit.*), appear to have been peopled by 'Insular Picts' in the years before the Viking Age (*cf.* Jennings & Kruse 1995). The absence of a discernible Pictish stratum in the place-names of these islands (*ibid.*:252) suggests that the local onomastic slate was wiped clean by the incoming Norse – leaving a *tabla raza* onto which the recorded G nomenclature was then implanted.

While it is difficult to say with certainty that all of Islay's G phrasal names post-date the Norse adventus, there are certainly 5 examples on MacDougall's map of the modern type which might be thought very late indeed (*cf.* Watson 1904:xl-xli) – *ie.* Airigh nam Beist, and Tighandrom in Kildalton, Gartachossan, Island (*Ellenomukydow* (1584)) and Tigh nan Cnoc in Kilarrow and Gartacharra in Kilchoman.

Other potentially post-Norse names include those where the generic is combined with a personal name. In Ireland, which provides the closest and earliest source of cognate material for Islay's G nomenclature, the widespread use of personal names in place-names can only be traced as far back as the 13th century introduction of written fiscal practise (*cf.* Price 1963:120). In addition to independent *cill-* names which represent a body of 14 such coinages in the present survey,[167] personal names can be found in a further 12 of the G names on MacDougall's map – Airigh Ghuaidhre, Ballachlaven, Ballighillan, Ballimartin, Balole, Balulive, Tiervaagain in Kilmeny and Arivoichalluim, Ballynaughton, Ballyneal, Ballychatricun and Tighcarmagan in Kildlaton. Three of these, representing around 4% of that total, contain ON loan-names – Balole, Balulive and Airigh Ghuaidhre (all in Kilmeny), from **Óla(fr)/ *Óle(ifr)*, **Ulfr* and

[166] While Nicolaisen (2001:44-60) had previously argued that Islay's G *sliabh* (m) 'mountain, moor' names should be dated to the island's Dalriadan heyday, this conclusion was based on a limited data-set. Re-appraisal of the evidence using more modern research techniques has led Simon Taylor (2002:50-2) to conclude that there is nothing in the distribution of this element to support the idea of very early coinage in Islay or to suggest that this it had ceased to be productive by the year AD 900.

[167] The significance of Islay's *cill-* names will be discussed at length below and in Chapter 8.

Guðrøðr respectively – and are therefore especially unlikely to pre-date the Viking Age. At least one other formally G name on MacDougalls map, Airigh Sgallaidh in Kilchoman, contains an ON loan of another kind – a standard appellative, in this case ON *skalli* (m) meaning 'bald (summit)' (Appendix I).

When taken alongside ONX names, these more specific groupings of phrasal names account for almost three quarters of the formally G settlement names on MacDougall's map – suggesting that very few, if any, pre-date the Norse *adventus*. Further corroboration for this conclusion is provided by a series of external linguistic developments associated with the re-organisation of administrative, ecclesiastical and agricultural systems.

7.3.2 Individual generics

By examining the background and usage of the most common G generics in the farm-names on MacDougall's map and comparing these with the better understood usage of other areas, it is hoped to establish whether any of these – either individually or as class – are more or less likely to pre- or post-date the Viking *adventus* and if so, ideally, by how long. Similar examination of the ON generics might help to show when and why certain generics were used and possibly even how late ON language and naming traditions remained active on the island.

Given that the etymologically certain farm-names on MacDougall's map present a body of 31 ON and 30 G generics, there will not be room to examine all of them here. Instead, closer scrutiny will be reserved for generics which are present in three or more examples. As these groupings account for around three fifths of the identifiable, non-Scots total, it will allow reasonably convincing extrapolation to be made over the remainder. We shall begin with topographic generics.

7.3.3 Settlement names with topographic generics

Interestingly, neither G nor ON topographic settlement names compare well with the average in terms of 'Land-Quality or 'Relative Size' (Figure 27). This can be explained to a certain extent by the Islay landscape. Areas with prominent natural features which might invite topographic settlement names – such as central Kildalton – offer only restricted possibilities for settlement development. This generalised distribution of farms with topographic names can be compared and contrasted with the names of farms in the less varied but more fertile landscapes of central Kilarrow and Kilmeny – areas typified by tighter clusters of habitative names, which have clearly had much greater capacity for settlement development yet lack the environmental inspiration for topographic generics. It seems likely, therefore, that the average 'Land Quality' associated with topographic settlement names is a demographic anomaly or has been pushed downwards since the time of coinage as a result of settlement expansion, agricultural improvement *etc.* in areas where habitative settlement names predominate.

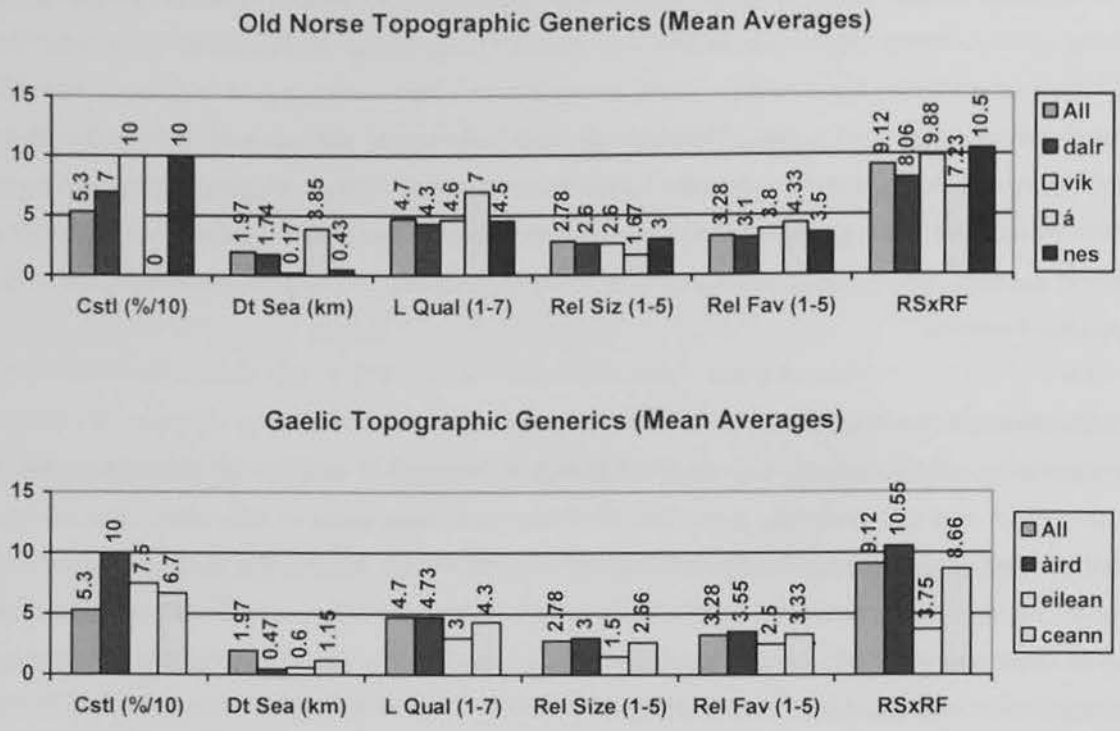
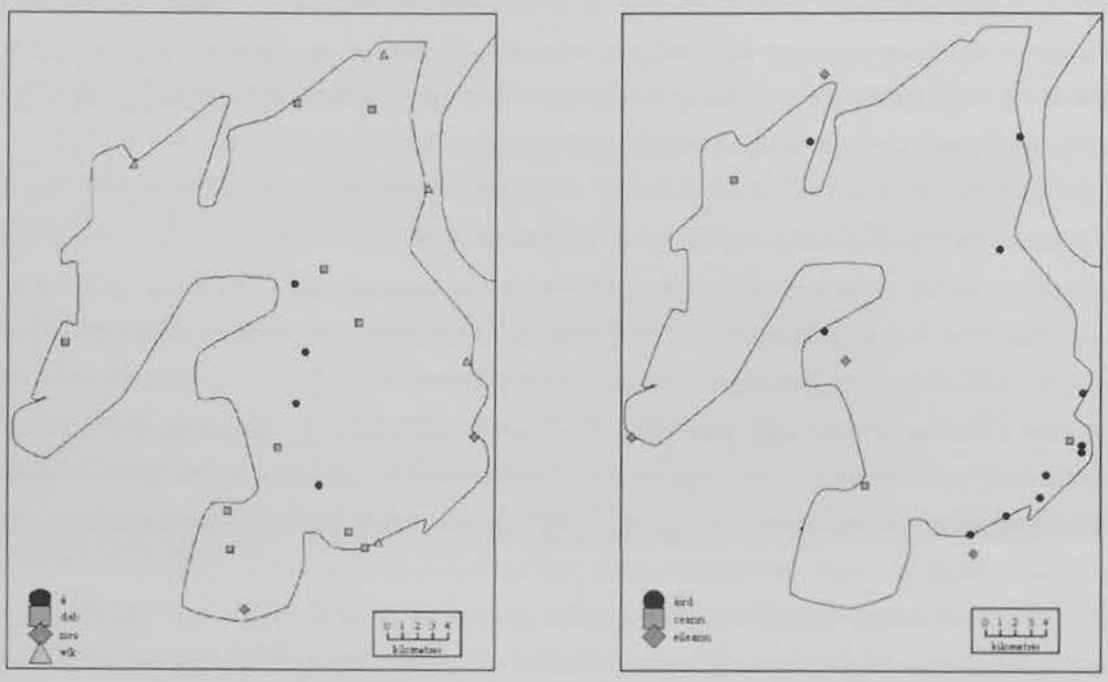


Figure 27: Common topographic generics in the farm-names on MacDougall's map I



ON topographic generics *G topographic generics*

Figure 28: Common topographic generics in the farm-names on MacDougall's map II.[168]

[168] Only uncontrasted names are shown here (see above)

If it is assumed that topographic settlement names belong to the earliest *strata* of Norse nomenclature in Islay, it can also be assumed that they were originally associated with prestigious individuals. It is interesting, therefore, that the 'Land Quality' associated with coastal ON *-nes* names should be lower than that of the onomastically equivalent G *àird-* names, while that of inland ON *-á* names should be higher than inland G names such as *ceann.* This suggests, once again, that the earliest ON settlers were concerned as much with high quality arable land as direct access to the sea and that the lower proportion and lower 'Land Quality' of ON names in coastal areas is due, in part at least, to an influx of prestigious G speakers and their followers in the later medieval and early modern periods.

Comment must also be made on the appellative range of ON and G topographic generics in the settlement-names on MacDougall's map. In a recent article on Arran place-names, Nicolaisen (1992:102) remarked of that particular island's Norse nomenclature that '[it] experiences the island from the sea, not only visually but also while exploring and utilising it' (*cf.* Fellows-Jensen 1987:149; Crawford 1987:104). It might therefore be considered of some interest that the majority of ON topographic settlement names on MacDougall's map also denote natural features which can be seen from the sea. Could this mean that Norse settlement in Islay was at one point limited to coastal enclaves after all? This seems unlikely. Like Arran, Islay is a relatively small island, where most of the most prominent natural features are visible from the sea (*cf.* Appendix I). Thus it comes as no surprise that *vík* 'bay' and *nes* 'headland', for example, should dominate the *corpus* of ON topographic generics. That ON generics denoting inland topographic features are less common can be explained as a reflex of the Islay landscape (see above). To suggest that they were somehow unusual in this respect, would be extremely misleading. It will be clear from Figures 25 and 28 above, that the great majority of G topographic generics in the settlement names on MacDougall's map also denote natural features that can be seen from the sea.

7.3.4 Settlement names with cultural generics

Certain G generics are far more common in the Islay nomenclature than others. Two of these – *baile* and *cill* – represent around a third of the G farm-names shown on MacDougall's map. They can also be linked with historical developments in Islay and elsewhere, which could help to explain their frequency and give a general indication of their relative age.

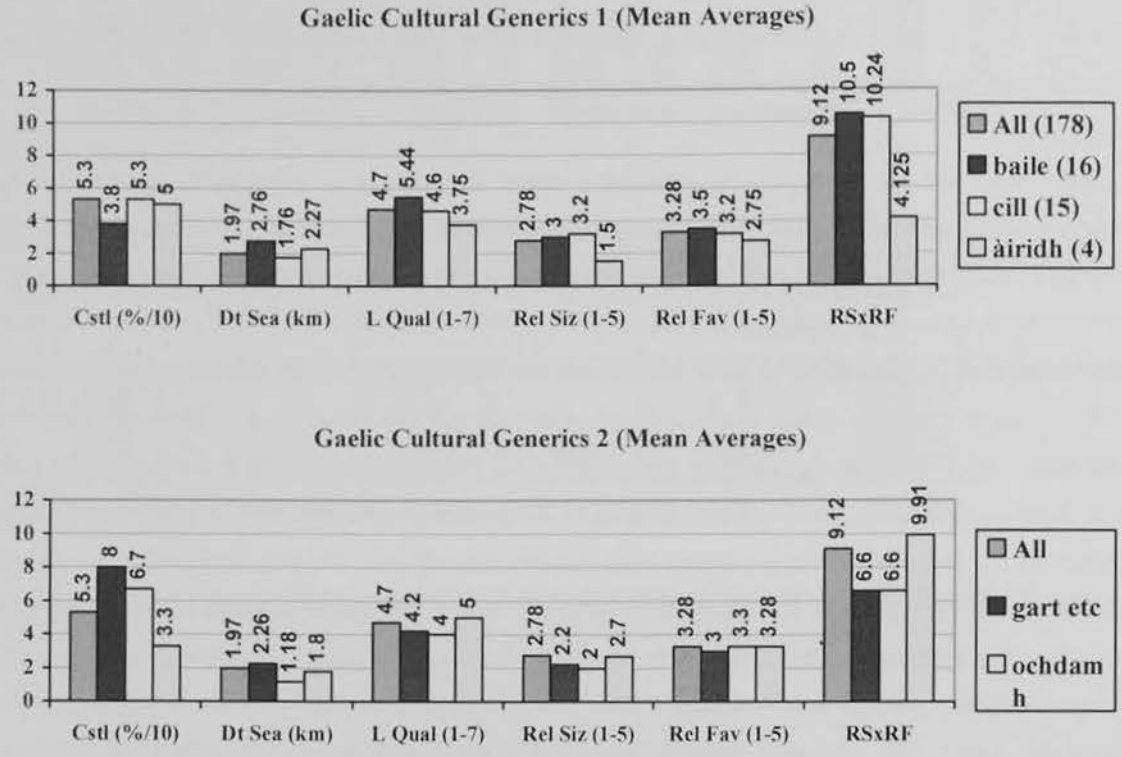
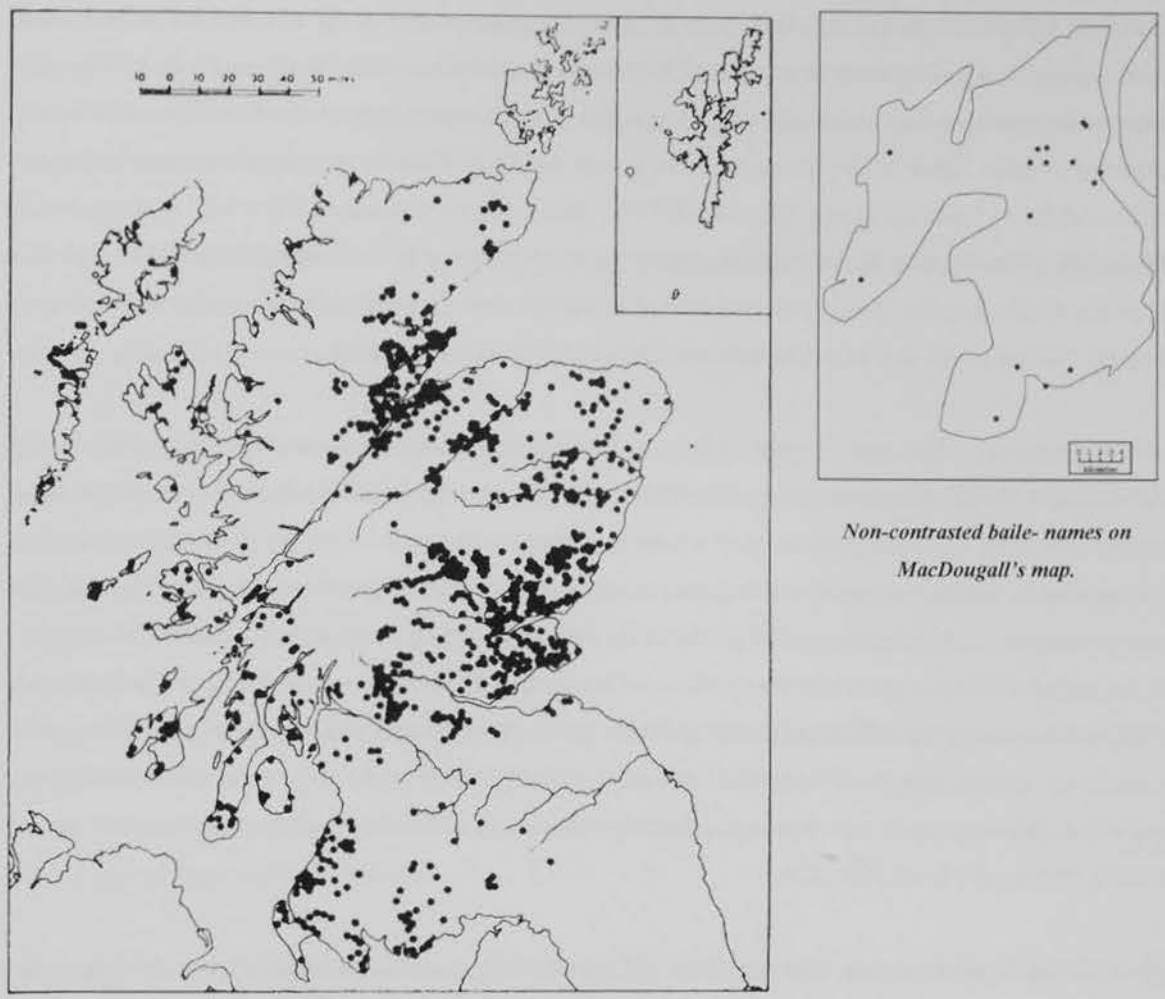


Figure 29: Common G cultural generics on MacDougall's map

7.3.4.1 *Baile-*

The element *baile* (m) occurs in 18 of the 178 farm-names shown on MacDougall's map. Of these, two – Ballinaby and Pendicle of Ballinaby in Kilchoman (but *cf.* above) – contain an ON *ex nomine* onomastic unit,[169] with a further two – Ballynaghton More and Ballinaghton Beg – representing division of the Baile Neaghton recorded in 1408 (Appendix I). With 15 independent constructs, *baile* therefore ranks above *cill* as the most common G habitative generic and second most common habitative generic overall after ON *bólstaðr*. This conforms with the pattern found elsewhere in Scotland and Ireland. As Nicolaisen (2001:176) points out, *baile* is amongst the most common G place-name generics in Scotland – with examples occurring 'wherever Gaelic has been, or still is, spoken in Scotland'. In Ireland, the generic has been recognised as 'the most prevalent of all local terms' (Joyce 1861:484)

[169] The (slim) possibility that two further *baile*-names, Ballychatricun and Ballivicar, contain an ON *ex nomine* onomastic unit is discussed above and in Appendix I.



Non-contrasted baile- names on MacDougall's map.

Baile- names on the OS 1:50,000 map (Nicolaisen 2001:177)

Figure 30: baile- names

In terms of spatial characteristics, Islay's *baile-* farms, are, on average, more likely to be land-locked (62%) than farms with any other type of formally G name (35%). Distance to the sea is also greater, with a mean average of 2.76km compared to 1.82km for 'All G' names and an overall mean average of 1.97km. Generally speaking, this type of farm also possesses by far the highest mean average 'Land Quality' (5.44) and 'Relative Favourability' (3.5) of any G cultural generic; and after *cill-* names, the largest 'Relative Size' of any class of G name (3.55). It should also be noted that the great majority of *baile-* farms are found in two major clusters: in the central parts of Kilmeny (9) and Kildalton (4).

While Olson (1983:193-5) concluded on the basis of non-linguistic analysis that Hebridean *baile-* names were 'peripheral', this is clearly not the case in Islay. Considering that Olson's study areas in Islay contained only one *baile-* name apiece and that neither of these falls within either of the two major clusters, it is not unsurprising that they should be unrepresentative of the name class a whole.

In recent years, the noun *baile* has been defined as: 'a village, hamlet, town' (Dwelly:59), 'a town, township, E.Ir. *baile*: (io b.m.) – place; piece of land (belonging to one family or individual)' (M:26) and more simply as a 'homestead, farmstead' (DIL:63:15). It should be noted, however, that while the OIr noun *baile* is attested at a relatively early stage, this is in the restricted sense of 'wall' or 'enclosure' (Price 1963:119). There is, in fact, no evidence for its use as an element in settlement-names before the middle of the 12th century (Price 1963:119 & FN1). According to Nicolaisen (2001:172) *baile*-names in the far SW of Scotland are therefore 'quite clearly not as late as their Irish counterparts would imply'. But why this should be clear, other than it because follows his own theory that Gaelic names in the former Scottish Dalriada must date to its Dalriadan heyday, is difficult to understand.

Nicolaisen (2001:178-9) concedes that '[t]he post-Norse nature of some *Pal*-names is also proved by the incorporation of Norse elements as specifics after the Gaelic generic'. He also admits that even '[i]n most instances [where] the name is thoroughly Gaelic [...] there is no way of knowing in what chronological relationship to the Norse period these names would stand'. But as the widespread distribution of this generic suggests a protracted period of productivity, he nevertheless goes on to conclude that the majority of Scottish *baile*-names must date to an extended but otherwise undocumented period of Gaelic/Pictish bilingualism prior to the 10th century during which the G language and G naming-practises were in the ascendancy. Considering the documented Irish usage of *baile*, however, there are good reasons to suspect that many *baile-* names in both Scotland generally and Islay in particular result from a positive flurry of naming activity at a much later date.

Price (1963:123) notes various examples from 13th century Irish manuscripts which suggest the term *baile* came into use as a local synonym for the Latin *villa* and OE *tūn* introduced by early Anglo-Norman settlers to denote individual settlement in legal and fiscal documents. Given that the use of written documents was not a feature in the transfer of land ownership in Ireland before the middle of the 12th century, it could be argued that the use of *baile* in vernacular Irish place-names is a direct reflex of Anglo-Norman naming patterns and fiscal tradition (*cf.* Price 1963:124). As this period corresponds to the feudalisation of Scotland, at a point when many areas were still Gaelic-speaking, there is no reason why a similar development could not have taken place there – with the bulk of *baile*-names being a direct or in some cases indirect reflex of the granting, re-granting or otherwise restructuring and recording of land-rights. Working on Nicolaisen's own criteria, this is backed by the far higher density of *baile*-names to the east of Druim Alban in the fertile heartlands of the Scottish kingdom (Figure 30 above). As the feudalisation of the Scottish mainland corresponds to the period during which the MacSorleys were consolidating control of Islay and the Isles, it is perhaps no coincidence that we see groupings of *baile*-names in the areas directly adjacent to the Lordship centre on Eilean Mór and around the seat of their MacKay henchmen in Ballyvicar. This might in turn point to the replacement by *baile-* of an existing vernacular term for a standard type of settlement (*cf.* Gelling 1983:259).

Attention can be drawn in this respect to the name Ballimartin in Kilmeny (Appendix I). When it first enters the rentals in 1631 as, it appears to take the place of a now lost Stainepoll (1627), from ON **Steinabólstaðr*, 'stone(y) farm'. Whether this Ballemertine arose as a direct result of re-naming or as a shift of focus within the farm-district in not known. It would not be unreasonable, however, to see it as a broad replacement for the earlier ON *–bólstaðr* construct – suggesting that Islay *baile* is not only potentially very late but the semantic equivalent of ON *bólstaðr*. The possibility that this phenomenon was more widespread is raised by the presence of ON **Sgarabais* and **Collapus* as *ex-nomine* onomastic units in the dependent G nature-names Cnoc Sgarabais near Balole and Dun Chollapus near Balulive in Kilmeny respectively (see notes on Stoinsha and Duisker in Appendix I).

This clustering of *baile*-names is also indicative of secondary usage,[170] an assertion which can be demonstrated through closer examination of the names Balliharvey, Balleachdrach, Balulive and Balole in Kilmeny parish. The first of these seems likely to derive from G **Baile airbhe*, 'the farm by the boundary wall', suggesting the subdivision of an earlier holding with a more prestigious name – in this case, most probably the disappointingly vague Sean Ghairt or 'Old enclosure'. At c.60m OD, it is reasonable to suggest that the name Balleachdrach, G for '(the) lower farm', represents a late division from the adjacent prestige centre of Lossit, at c.120m OD. While the specifics in Balulive and Balloal are not so clearly evocative of division, the fact that they contain borrowed ON personal-names means they cannot pre-date the Viking Age and points indirectly to coinage at a late stage, possibly following subdivision of estates with ON names.

As a class, then, there are reasonable grounds for dating the Islay *baile*-names to the period after the Viking Age and in all likelihood to the years immediately before or after the establishment of the MacSorley dynasty in the second half of the 12th century

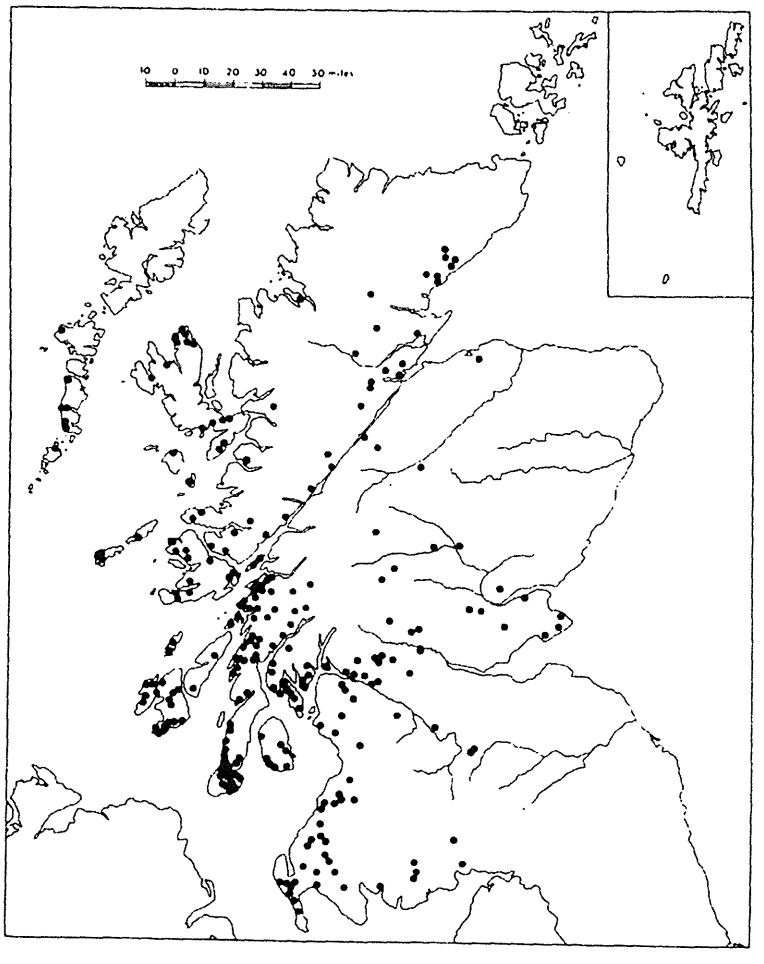
7.3.4.2 *Cill-*

The generic *cill* (f) occurs in 17 of the 178 farm-names shown on MacDougall's map. Of these, one, Kilnave in Kilchoman, contains an ON *ex nomine* onomastic unit, with a further four – Kilennan Upper and Lower in Kilarrow and West and East Kilchoman in Kilchoma – representing subdivision of an earlier *Killenane* (1507 *etc.*) and *Kilcomen* (1507 *etc.*) respectively. With 14 independent constructs, *cill* therefore ranks second to *baile* as the most common G cultural generic in the settlement names on MacDougall's map and the third most common generic overall after ON *bólstaðr*.

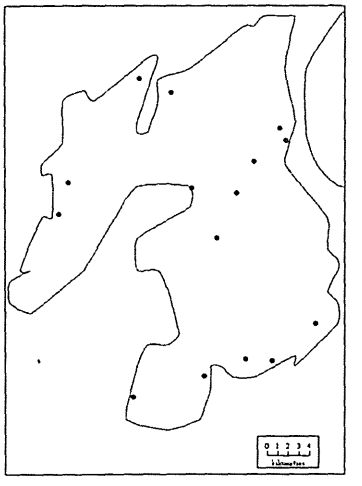
In terms of spatial characteristics, farm-districts with *cill*-names have a fractionally lower 'Land-Quality' than the overall mean average (4.6 compared to 4.7). Although they are larger in terms of 'Relative Size' than all of the other G generics examined here (3.2), this is only about half-way up the spread for ON

[170] There are indications that *baile* was also used in another, more prestigious sense. Lamont's (1957:104, FN4) suggestion that 'some of the numerous [*baile*- names in Islay] may have derived from "Bailebiataigh" rather than from the "baile" as a township' will be considered at length in Chapter 8.

cultural generics. Unlike *baile-* and *–bólstaðr* names, however, farm-districts beginning *cill-* can be found at fairly regular intervals across the entire island, which might in part explain the less than exciting averages of these (former) ecclesiastical centres.



Cill-names on the OS 1:50,000 map (Nicolaisen 2001:184)



Non-contrasted cill-names on MacDougall's map.

Figure 31: Cill- names

G *cill* derives ultimately from Latin *cella* (f), meaning 'cell or church' (Nicolaisen 2001:183), and is usually indicative of precisely that, a place which is, or has at one time been, a centre of Christian worship. It is important to note, however, as we shall see in Chapter 8 that this does not always indicate direct association with a prestige centre.

According to Nicolaisen (2001:183), the concentration of this particular generic in historic Dalriada indicates that it ceased to be productive before 'Gaelic speakers moved into Pictish territory proper [...] and before Gaels and Norsemen stood facing each other in Caithness' – *ie.* before the year AD 800. In corroboration of this assessment, he goes on to assert that 'the saints' names involved as specifics also pass the hagiological acid test, because [...] all identifiable and datable saints, commemorated by *Kil-* names, belong to the sixth, seventh and eighth century, especially the first two' (*ibid.*:183-5). But there

are at least three examples of the generic *cill-* being combined with the name of a biblical personage in Islay. Both the well-attested farm-districts of Kildalton and Killeyan, for example, commemorate the biblical saint, John (Appendix I); the burial ground of Cill Mhoire is dedicated to the Virgin Mary (see notes on Lagavulin un Kildalton); and there may be others. As further examples can be found elsewhere in Scotland, Nicolaisen's assertion must be considered dubious. Simply because a saint can be reliably dated to the 6th, 7th or 8th century is, moreover, no guarantee that every dedication to that saint will date to the same period. Following the Synod of Whitby in AD 664 churches did not have to be consecrated to their founder. Indeed, as Swift (1987:336) points out, 'it was common to make dedications to one's local or clan saint at a much later date' (*cf.* Mackinlay 1914:121-33; Ó Riáin 1983:25-6).[171] Neither is it possible to say, as Olson (1983:198) suggests, that *cill*-names 'appear from the early records to have been well established by the 12th century'. In point of fact, there are no extant references to any Islay *cill*-names prior to the middle of the 13th century. Indeed, there are reasons to suspect that many of them may date to a period of substantial Church (re-)organisation in Islay in the late 12th or early 13th century. As the introduction of the diocesan and parish systems co-incided with the introduction of written fiscal practise, there is a strong possibility that *cill* names – as with *baile* names – are a product of Manx or Lordship scriptoria.

The Islay landscape is dotted with the ruins of numerous chapels and graveyards. As many of these also bear the generic *cill-*, it has been assumed that coinage may be linked to the period of construction. According to Catharine Swift (1987), the earlier, dry-stone ruins can be divided into four groups for the purposes of relative dating. Groups A and B, which she links to the period 'after the tenth-century pagan burials but before the early twelfth century' (*ibid.*:319, 248-9); and groups C and C1 which she traces on the basis of their 'widespread dispersion and [...] closer parallels with [...] mortared churches' to the early 12th century (*ibid.*:319). Given the parallels shown by structures of both grouping to the architectural traditions of Man (*ibid.*:327), it seems even less likely that they represent direct continuity of local Christian practise or naming tradition from the pre-Norse era. That is not to say there was no continuity of resort at these sites. It should be noted here that where later medieval Manx Keeill sites have been excavated, they are often found to overlie previous chapel structures (Morris 1983). It must be wondered, however, whether the efforts of the Christian Kings of Man or the Isles might not have consiously resurrected long neglected sites and re-named them specifically for religious purposes. It must be significant in this respect that none of the farm-names on MacDougall's map appear to include any of the 20 or so generics – including Nemeton, Annat, Dysart and others – which Watson (1926:244-269) regards as typical of early (=pre-Norse) Christian centres.

The establishment of the Diocese of Sodor and Man and the Manx parish system are usually traced to the exceptionally long and peaceful reign of Manx king Óláfr *bitlingr* (ON 'the diminutive') Guðrøðsson (*c.*

[171] Disappointingly, however, Swift (1987:341) goes on to conclude a mere five pages later that '[t]he early nature of the dedications [in Islay] suggests in turn that the *cill* names on Islay predate or are contemporary with the Viking arrival'.

1103/14 - 1153). As Óláfr's domain also included Islay,[172] it is possible that he was also responsible for similar developments there. If not, they will have been introduced by the incoming MacSorley dynasty – perhaps as a political response to developments in Man – following the establishment of the diocese of Argyll by Somerled's sons *c.* 1183 (*cf.* Cowan & Easson 1976:210; MacDonald 1997:211; Woolf 2003:175). As in other areas of administrative ritual (*cf.* Caldwell 2003:61-75), it is likely that the MacSorleys would have deliberately asserted links with the area's ancient traditions, in this case saints, to further establish their legitimacy as rulers (MacDonald 1997:200-33). Somerled himself tried in vain to secure the high-flying Irish cleric Flaithbrtach Ua-Brolchain as abbot of Iona (AU 1164.2). Several of his successors were acknowledged as benefactors of the Church. It appears to have been Somerled's son, Ranald, for example, who founded the reformed abbey and nunnery on Iona (NMRS:NM22SE5).[173] He also made generous donations to the Cluniac priory of Paisley, bestowing upon the future Abbey 'in the first year eight cows and two pennies from every house in his dominions from which smoke proceeds; and in every succeeding year one penny; while his wife Fiona gives a tenth of all the goods which God has given her'. The grant ends with a warning that unless this tax was paid promptly by his heirs they would be cursed, with the oath being taken on 'the patron saint of all highlanders, St Columba of Iona' (Cameron1832:125 & 148). This generosity is mirrored by the activities of Ranald's direct descendent 'Good' John of Islay, the first 'Lord of the Isles', who is remembered as a patron of the Church and religious sculpture within the Lordship area (Lamont 1972:29; Caldwell 2001:38).

However, as virtually all of Islay's ecclesiastically important centres are denoted by the generic *cill*, compared to only around 12% of Scottish parishes generally, and none of them contain any of Watson's 'early' elements, it might be imagined that this class of name in Islay dates to a relatively limited period of productivity, coinciding perhaps with the establishment of the MacSorley dynasty and, as with *baile*-names, the introduction of written fiscal practise (see Chapter 8).

[172] The Manx dynasty's personal connections with Islay are known to have been strong on a personal level around this time too. It will be remembered from Chapter 3, for example, that Óláf's father Guðrøðr Crovan died (peacefully) in Islay around 1095 (CRM§23).

[173] Although popular tradition regards these as Benedictine institutions (*cf.* MacDonald 1997:218-9), they are recorded as Augustine in the Vatican records (NMRS:NM22SE5 and 14.00).

7.3.5 Other common, Gaelic cultural generics

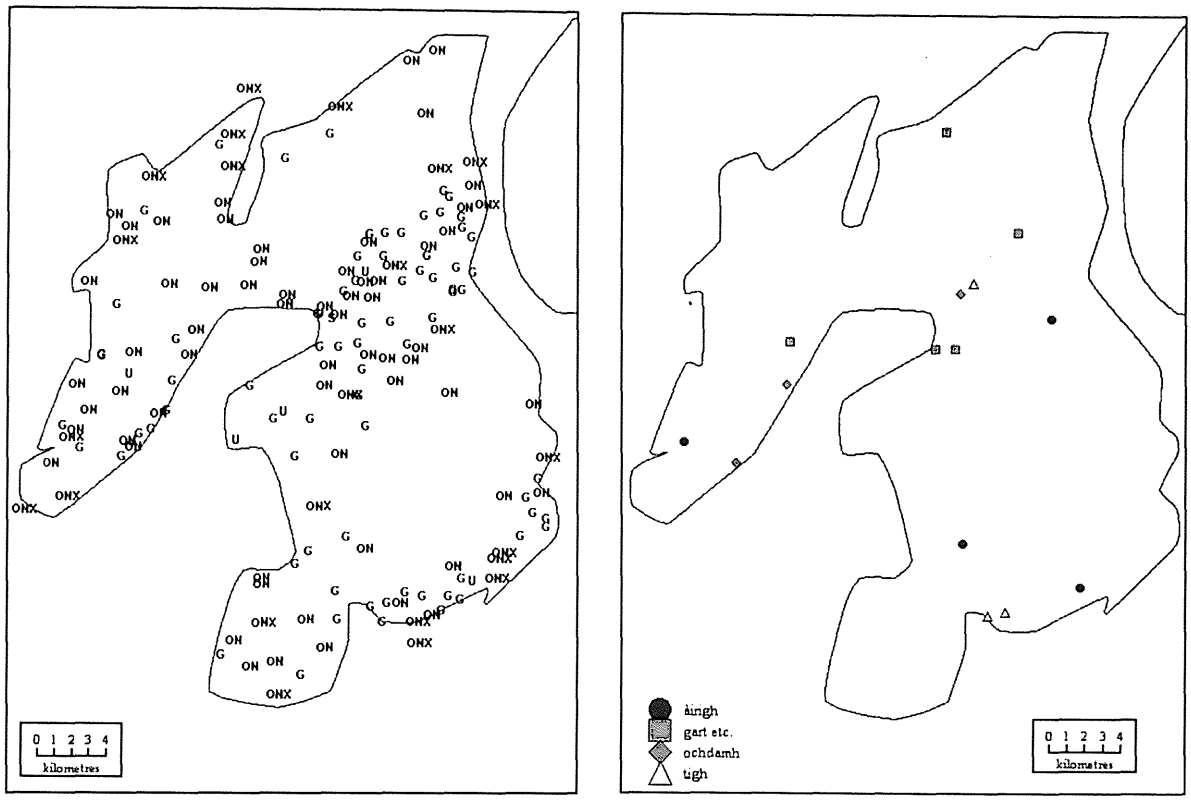


Figure 32: Other common G cultural generics on MacDougall's map

7.3.5.1 *Àiridh-*

The next most common G cultural generic, *àirigh* (f), appears 5 times on MacDougall's map. Scrutiny of the form of these names suggests they are unlikely to have been coined by the island's pre-Norse inhabitants. One of them, Airidh Sgallaidh in Kilchoman, appears to contain the ON loan word, **Skalli* (*cf.* Stewart 2004:413), another, Corrary in Kilarrow, could well be a gaelicised version of an existing ON name, **Káraergi* 'Kári's shieling', yet another, Airidh Ghuaidhre in Kilmeny, is likely to contain a loaned ON personal-name **Guðrøðr* and the remaining two, Airigh nam Beist and Arivoichallum in Kildalton, are of the phrasal type considered by Watson (1904:xl) to be late. As a class, farms with these generics were amongst the worst in Islay in terms of 'Land Quality' and 'Relative Size', suggesting a peripheral economic role, which is what we might expect from the acknowledged later usage of this generic. Although G *àirigh* appears to have begun life as a designation for fairly central farms on which cows were gathered to be milked, this meaning changed over the centuries. By the end of the Viking Age the semantic associations of *àirigh* lay not with the lowland milking place but the upland shieling (*cf.* Cox 2002:122-3: see also notes on *–setr* below) more accurately descriptive of these farm-districts.

7.3.5.2 *Gart- etc.*

4 of the farm-names on MacDougal's map contain a generic from this category comprising *gart* (m), *gort* (m) and *goirtean* (m). Whereas only two of them – Gartacharra in Kilchoman and Gartachossan in

Kilarrow – are of the more modern phrasal type and potentially therefore very late (*cf.* Watson 1904:xl), all four are considerably worse than average in terms of 'Land Quality' and 'Size'. As all four are located in areas adjacent to more substantial holdings with ON names, there is a possibility that Islay's *Gart- etc.* settlements and their names are economically and most likely also chronologically secondary to these holdings.

7.3.5.3 *Ochdamh-*

According to Thomas (1881-2:247), this generic is peculiar to Islay and Jura. There are three examples on MacDougall's map, with several others recorded in other sources. As a rule, they are on a par with the island's *àirigh-* names in terms of 'Land Quality' and 'Relative Size'. Given that all three are also adjacent to more substantial holdings with ON names, it is possible that the element *ochdamh* (adj) points to the post-Norse sub-division of farm-districts with Norse names (the relative youth of these names will be further discussed in Chapter 8).

7.3.5.4 *Tigh-*

Considering the use of the appellative *tech* to quantify land holdings in the *Senchus fer n'Alban*, one might have expected the generic *tigh* (m) to be far more common in the Islay settlement record if traditional views on the continuity of G language and culture were accurate. The fact that there are only three of them on MacDougall's map, however, suggests otherwise – as does the observation that two of these three examples are of the phrasal type and thus probably late. While the spatial averages for farms with *tigh*-names suggest that these were amongst the best in terms of 'Land Quality' and certainly not the smallest in terms of 'Relative Size', it should be noted that these averages represent the spread over only 3 examples. When the individuals in this data-set are examined more closely, it is clear that the mean average has been distorted by one particularly desirable holding, Tigh nan Cnoc, with the others being marginal in comparison.

7.3.6 ON cultural generics

While closer study of the ON generics in Islay's settlement names could potentially help to put them in hierarchical and chronological context with their G counterparts, it is likely to be more telling in terms of hierarchical and chronological relationships within the ON material itself. However, even the earliest Norse settlers in Islay had access to the full-spectrum of name types used up to that point in their Norwegian homelands. As a result, the physical distribution of these name-types is more likely to reflect a hierarchical relationship, be it social or economic, than a chronological one. It must also be remembered that even although all of the hitherto used ON generics were available to Norse settlers in Islay, it is unlikely that these were all productive at the same time or in the same temporal or hierarchical clusters that obtained in Norway. This makes it difficult to import the findings of earlier Scandinavian research which claimed that certain name-types were 'older' or 'younger' than others in absolute terms. Attention can be drawn here to the evolutionary model of settlement development championed by WFH Nicolaisen in the late 1960's (Chapter 4). Although it might be tempting to imagine that a wider distribution of a given place-name element was consistent with a chronologically later stage of settlement expansion, it has since been recognised by MacGregor (1986:84-101;1987), Gammeltoft (2001) and even Nicolaisen himself (1984:364) that various other factors, including topographical limitations, will have had a considerable impact on these patterns. This does not, however, mean that certain place-name elements could not fall in and out of fashion with slightly different semantic associations within roughly datable periods. In order to test this hypothesis, we will now examine the distribution and semantic associations of the more common ON cultural generics in Islay settlement names .

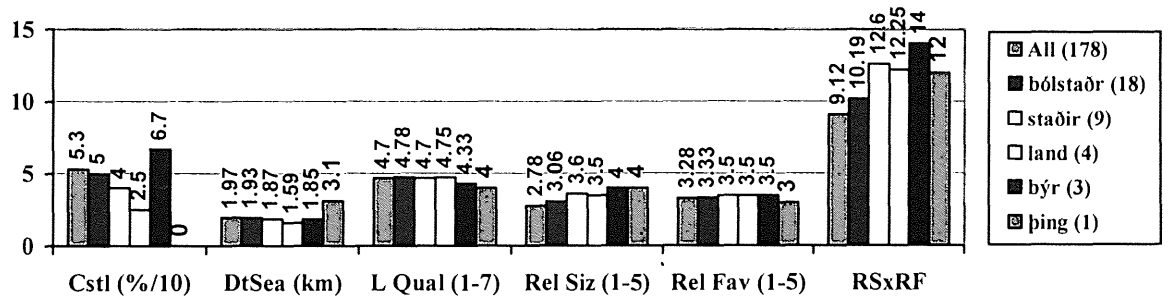


Figure 33: ON habitative genercs (mean average)

7.3.6.1 *-bólstaðr*

ON *bólstaðr* (m) is not only the most common ON generic in Islay settlement-names, with 18 non-contrasted examples it is also the most common generic of any kind amongst the farm-districts shown on MacDougall's map. As Thomas (1881-2:243-4) points out, it is also far more prevalent in the Islay nomenclature than that of anywhere else in the Inner or Outer Hebrides (see below).[174]

With the exception of Bolsa in Kilmeny parish and Nerabus in Kilchoman parish, these Islay *–bólstaðr* names appear in three relatively distinct clusters. The first is confined to the W extremity of Kilarrow to the N of the river Sorn and the adjacent part of Kilchoman; the second diminates the northern bank of the Sorn valley from Keppolsmore to Persabus in Kilmeny parish; with the third occupying a contiguous strip of the Oa peninsula in Kildalton between Ballyvicar in the NE and Dunaid in the SW.

The Kilarrow group consists of Lyrabus, Carabus, Kinnabus, Alabus, Skarabus, Eorabus and Grobolls, along with the contiguous holding of Culabus in Kilchoman. These farm-districts are situated on some of the best arable land on the island. They are also strategically important in as much as they dominate the area around the sheltered harbour at the head of Lochindaal and what could be easily be regarded as Islay's overland transport-hub – where the drove-road from Kilchoman meets those from Kilarrow, Kilmeny and Kildalton.

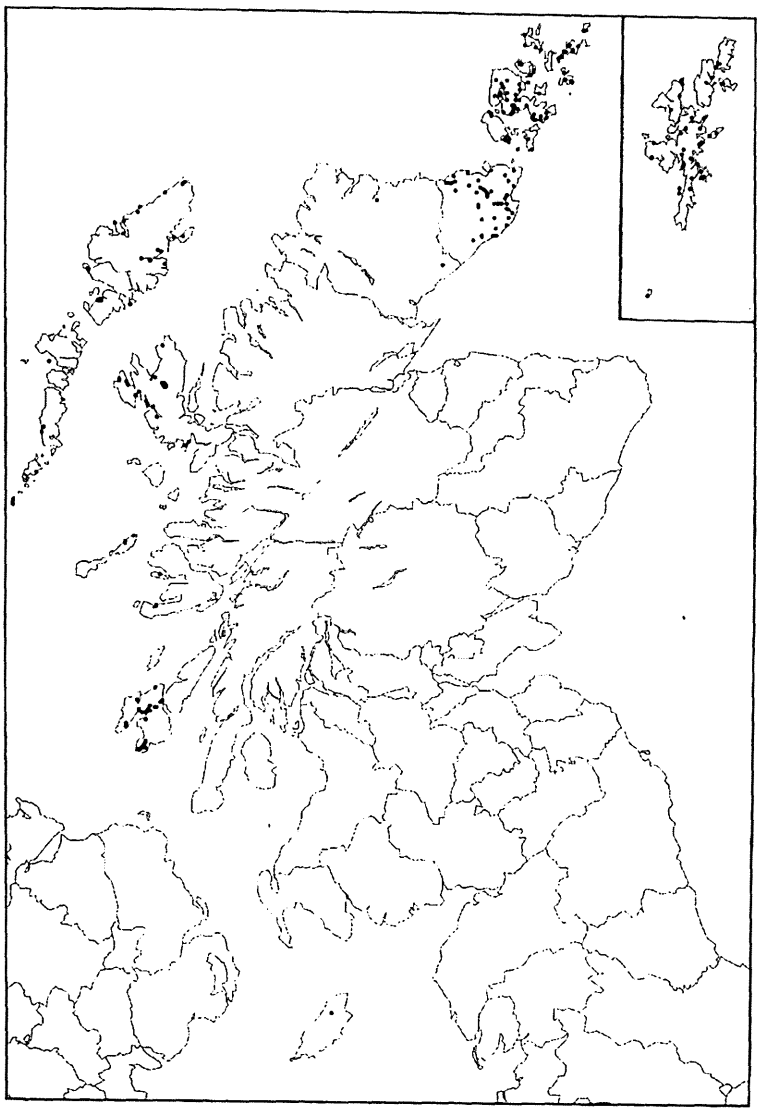
The Kilmeny cluster of Keppols, Robolls, Torabus, Persabus, to which can be added the now lost **Stainepolls* **Collapus* and **Sgarabais* (see notes on Ballymartin, Duisker and Stoinsha in Appendix I), is also on good land. These farm-districts dominate the drove road through the Sorn valley – particularly the section between Lochs Finlaggan and Ballygrant – as well the area around the important harbour and export point of Port Askaig.

The Oa group comprises Cornabus Cragabus, Lurabus, Assibus and Kinnabus, along with the later attested Risabus and Coillabus (Cragabus, Appendix I) and the now lost **Brannabus* and **Tornabus* (see notes on Ballyvicar in Kildalton in Appendix I). These farm-districts follow a vein of limestone bedrock down the middle of the Oa, virtually monopolising the main areas of calcareous soil in Kildalton. They also dominate the areas around the two important natural harbours in the 'Bay of Killnaughton', the strategically important view-point at Dunaid near the Mull of Oa and the crossroads on the important later medieval drove-roads between the Oa, the rest of Kildalton parish and Kilarrow to the North.

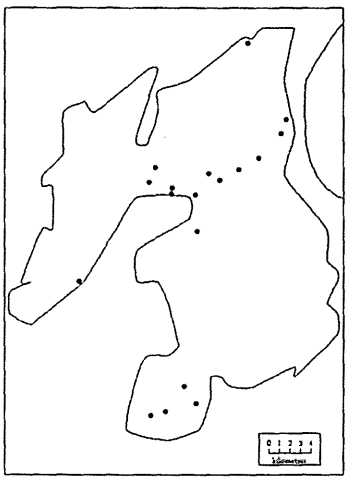
The person(s) who controlled these groups of farm-districts would have had a fairly strong hold on the island's economy. It is interesting, therefore, that while all three clusters are adjacent to similar clusters of

[174] According to Thomas (1881-2:243-4), '[t]he greatest peculiarity in the Norse names of Islay is the prevalence of *bólstaðr* = dwelling place, homestead; it usually indicates good land. In Islay, "bolstad" includes about 1/3 of the whole Norse names, in Lewis, only about 1/12'

G *baile-* names, the groupings of each tend to be mutually exclusive. Such distribution strengthens the possibility that the clusters of *baile-* names represent a late G overlay of earlier ON *–bólstaðr* names.



–bólstaðr names in Scotland (Gammeltoft 2001:81)

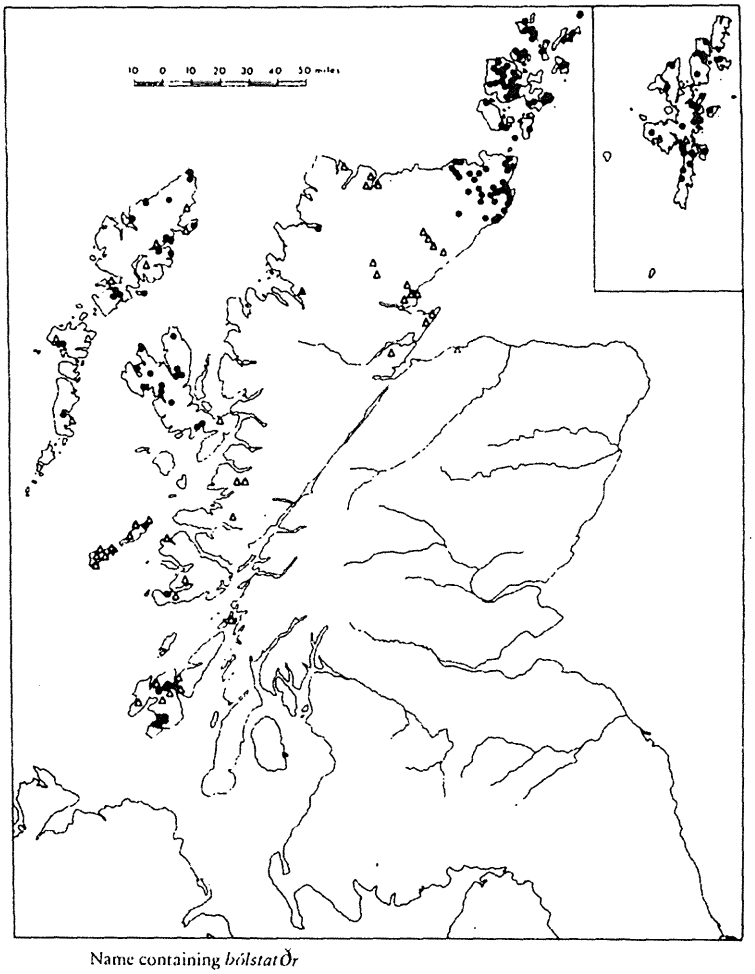


Non-contrasted -bólstaðr names on MacDougall's map

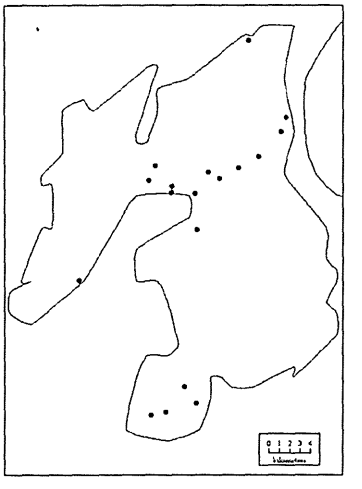
Figure 34: -bólstaðr names I

In terms of spatial characteristics, the Islay *-bólstaðr* sites are just as likely to be 'Coastal' as 'Land-Locked', with a mean average distance of 1.93km from the sea. Their mean average 'Land Quality' (4.78) was slightly higher than that for all Islay farm-districts (4.7) and all G generics except *baile* (5.44). When it came to 'Relative Favourability' (3.06), however, farm-districts with *bólstaðr-* names had the lowest value of the 5 ON habitative generics studied here after *þing* (3). While they also had the lowest 'Relative Size' (3.06), this was nevertheless higher than the overall average (2.78), that for all of the G generics except *cill* (3.2) and at least as high as all of the ON topographic generics.

Olson (1983:246) suggests that the relative age group of ON *bólstaðr* names in the Hebrides is 'primary' and that they belong to the first phase of settlement, which he dates to AD 820-860. But it seems more likely from the clustering and environmental characteristics outlined above that the Islay examples represent secondary development – certainly in an economic sense and probably also in a chronological one. This can be compared directly with the findings of Marwick (1952:235-7), Thomson (1995:58-9) and Gammeltoft (2001:278) on the physical characteristics of *–bólstaðr* names in other parts of *Scotia Scandinavica.*



–bólstaðr names on the OS 1:50,000 map (Nicolaisen 2001:121)



Non-contrasted -bólstaðr names on MacDougall's map

Figure 35: -bólstaðr names II

The use of ON *bólstaðr* as an element in Scottish place-names has recently been studied in depth by Peder Gammeltoft (2001).[175] According to Gammeltoft (*ibid.*:232), there are 240 examples of this generic in Scotland (including the Isle of Man). This compares to 108 examples in Norway (*ibid.*:222) and 18 certain and 2 possible examples in Iceland (*ibid.*:249) and 'testifies to [its popularity] at the time of the

[175] See also: Indl:44; *-bolstadh* KLNM II:68-70 *etc.*

Norse settlement expansion into this area in the 9th century' (*ibid.*:233). The relative absence of this name type from the Faroes, with only three possible examples (*ibid.*:249), from the Isle of Man, with only one example – *Bravost* in Kirk Christ Lezayre (*ibid.*:283-4) – and its complete absence from the W coast of mainland Scotland (*ibid.*:283), Ireland (*ibid.*:284) and the NW of England is explained by Gammeltoft on two levels: unsuitable topography (*ibid.*:286 & 279-282) and the fusion of the incoming Scandinavian population with the existing culture at a very early stage 'thereby cutting short the full flowering of the nomenclature' (*ibid.*:283). Although Gammeltoft (*ibid.*:284) sees evidence for this assimilation in traditional interpretations of the annalistic *Gall-Gaedhil* (*cf.* Chapter 3), this does not explain why Islay at the SW extremity of the Hebrides – and presumably, therefore, in *Gall-Gaedhil* territory – should be littered with *bólstaðr* names, when the coast of Wester Ross – well within the Orcadian sphere of influence until much later – should have none.

Gammeltoft is also of the opinion that *–bólstaðr* names are relatively early in the overall scheme of Norse naming history. Evidence rehearsed in favour of this assertion includes: the absence of Christian personal names among the specifics (Gammeltoft 2001:244) and the existence of **Kirkju-* and **Krossbólstaðr* names – which he explains alternatively as pre-Conversion Norse Christian names, Norse reference to pre-Norse ecclesiastical monuments or Norse land owned by the Church (*ibid.*:244-5). This last example, however, might actually suggest a longer period of productivity in the Northern Isles at least, extending into the 11th century and beyond. As Thomson (1995:48-9) points out:

> New names [containing ON generics] continued to be formed as late as the nineteenth century when *kví* (field), *garth* (enclosure) and *bu* (big farm) remained in use as common nouns. The essential meaning of *skáli* (hall) was also still understood [although it was by then used in an ironic sense and t]he term *setter-land* was commonly used in the eighteenth century from land reclaimed from the hill (moorland)' [...] Although the generics, *bólstaðr* and *staðir*, generally fell into disuse, information supplied by Brian Smith, Shetland Archivist, suggests that a new *bólstaðr*-name, Lunabister in Dunrossness (Shetland), was created as late as c. 1570 and so of all the generics, it seems that only *staðir* has not formed new place-names in the post-medieval period.

It must also be significant that there are no names of the **kirkjubólstaðr* type in Islay, where the pre-Reformation Church holdings are known to include a sizeable portion of the island's *–bólstaðr* names. As can be seen from Figure 36, the correlation of *bólstaðr* names with Church holdings is particularly clear in west-central Kilarrow and mid-eastern Kilmeny. This suggests that the *bólstaðr* material in Islay pre-dates the period when the Church regained a position of socio-political importance. It does not necessarily mean, however, that these names date to the opening stages of Norse settlement.

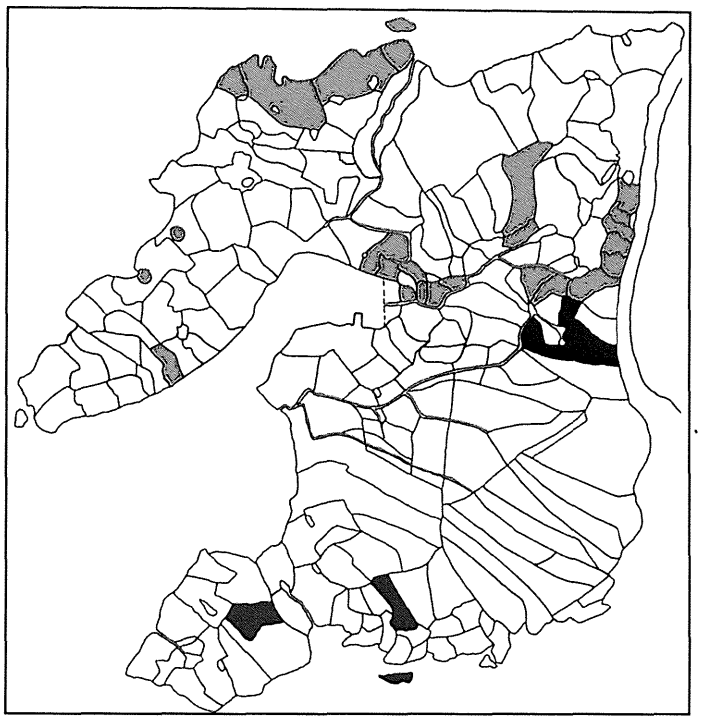
Further progress on this front can be made by examining the onomastic structure and distribution of the Islay *-bólstaðr* names. Of the 26 recorded *bólstaðr* names in Islay, only two are simplex and only one of these, 'Bolsa' in Kilmeny, appears on MacDougall's map. The earliest recorded form of this name is *Spulse* (1507). There is a possibility that the initial /s/ here is the remnant of a lost specific or at least its genitive allomorph. But as this type of contraction does not appear to have taken place in any of the other Norse names, we might guess that it has always lacked a specific element (Appendix I). Also, with the exception of Nerabus it is the only *bólstaðr* name which is relatively isolated from the island's other

bólstaðr names. These factors combined suggest that Bolsa may indeed be early, having been coined in the sense of 'large, independent farm' (see above).

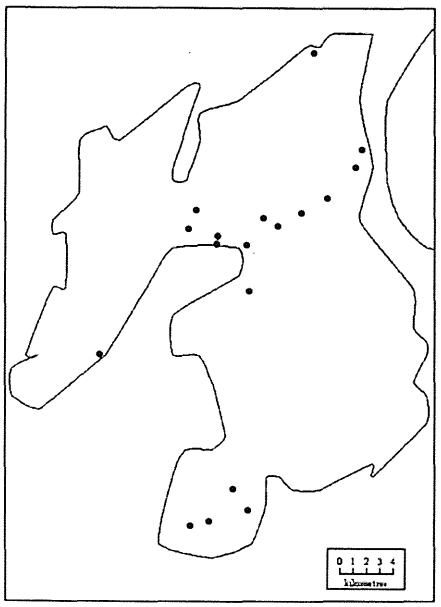
This can be contrasted with the remainder of the *corpus*, all of which have compound forms and appear in clusters. Given that the 18 examples shown on MacDougall's map represent only 2/3 of the total of 26 preserved as independent place-names or *ex nomine* onomastic units in dependent names (*cf.* Cox 1994:65),[176] there is a possibility that it was once even more prevalent. While Thomas (1881-2:244) suggests that '[t]his recurrence of "bolstad," and the absence of *vollr* or *vold*, usually Englished "wall," points to some dialectic peculiarity in the Norse "nam-men" or settlers', he can think of no other reason for this than the 'comparatively barren soil' of the other Hebridean islands. Olson (1983:242 & 245), on the other hand, surmises that this is because *bólstaðr* was the most common ON *denotatum* for 'farm' in the Hebrides during the Viking period and in the years up to 1266, arguing, moreover, that it had 'no other meaning than 'farm' (*ibid*:245). It is clear, however, that these clustered *bólstaðr* names represent a very specific type of economically secondary farm. While the unusual prevalence of this name-type in Islay could, potentially, point to an extended period of productivity with its adoption as a loan-word or rather progression into the local dialect of G, it could be argued that its clustering reflects the systematic division of large holdings into smaller units, perhaps within a very short period of time.

This last argument finds a certain degree of support in Islay's Norse funerary assemblages – many of which are thought to date to the late 10th century (*cf.* Chapter 3; Appendix I). Although the close temporal association of these artefacts could be coincidental, there is a possibility that the *-bólstaðr* names and Norse grave-goods alike reflect a renaissance of Norse elite culture in Islay on the eve of the official Conversion to Christianity and the wholesale re-introduction of the Gaelic language and culture to the island. It might not be to fanciful to imagine that this was connected with the appearance of the sons of Harald in the Isles – either directly through a possible Manx acquisition of Islay land-holdings or the imposition of new standards of fiscal practise. The complete absence of **Kirkjubólstaðr etc.* from the Islay material suggests that Islay *bólstaðr* names are unlikely to post-date this point.

[176] This is a remarkably close match for the total of 24 remembered in the traditional G verse: *Ceither busacha fichead 'an Ile, S ceithir ardacha fichead 'am Muile* (Twenty-four 'busses' in Islay, And twenty-four 'ards' in Mull) (Thomas 1881-2:244 from Nicolson 1881:79).



Church holdings in Islay mentioned in 1507/09 (lightest), 1541 (mid tone) & 1617 (darkest)



Non-contrasted -bólstaðr names on MacDougall's map

NB: The sub-farm-district areas highlighted above represent Church holdings likely to have been contained within secular farm-districts. A number of other Church lands are listed in the rentals of 1507 & 1509 and the charters of 1588 and 1617, which cannot be placed with certainty on MacDougall's map (see Figure 37 below).

Figure 36: Church holdings and settlement names in –bólstaðr

1507/09: **Gartnatiber** (16s 8d) & **Aremungane** (16s 8d) which are listed between the better documented farm-districts of (Dun) Kilslevane and Storrage in Kilmeny; **Sleak** (8s 4d) which is listed between Surnan and Kilmane in Kilmeny; **Due Innerloskyn**, which Lamont (1958:103) identified with Machrie in Kildalton; and **Skeak** pertinens Ornyssay (8s 4d), **Ochtocorrich** (16s 8d), which follow Grunnort in Kilchoman, completing the 1507/09 lists. The association of these last two names with 'the Herries of Illa' in the 1617 Charter, suggests they were actually in Kilmeny.

1561: The £20 lands of **Laintymanniche** and **Mwicheleische**.

1588: The Auchtenpairt holding of **Nekill**, presumably in Kilarrow; **Lowres**, which together with Skeag was valued as 2.5 Cowlands and followed the 7.5 Cowland holding of Sorne, may have been in Kilmeny; and the 'lands of Ardnew extending to 5 merklands' in Kilchoman. While this holding is mentioned in the earlier sources we are told here that it consists of the '**eighth land of Mee**, the middle tenement commonly known as **Balevannych**, and the island of Ardnew'.

1617: **Ellay** (6s), which is listed between Over Kilstewin and Gartintibbert in Kilmeny; **Knocan** (16s 8d) in Kilarrow.

Figure 37: Unidentified Church lands in Islay

7.3.6.2 *-staðir*

The second most common ON cultural generic in Islay and the fourth most common amongst the settlement-names shown on MacDougall's map is *staðir* (m). While there are 11 examples of this generic on MacDougall's map, two of these, Wester and Easter Ellister, are derived from an original *Ellister – *cf.* the single Ilastill recorded in 1507. While it is possible that some of the remainder have been confused with ON *–setr* (*cf.* Thomas 1881-2:242; Nicolaisen 2001:119; see appropriate sections in Appendix I), we can be absolutely certain that the total is substantially greater than that implied by the one dot shown on Islay on Nicolaisen's distribution map of this element in Scotland (Figure 38).[177]

According to Harry Ståhl (KLNM XVI:575-71), *-stad* is the most common place-name generic in the Nordic area – with Norway alone boasting around 2500 examples. While many of these are believed to date to the 5th or 6th century AD, this name type is thought to have been especially productive during the Viking Age (KLNM XVI:575). In Iceland, where the *terminus post quem* for all place-names can be effectively fixed to this period, *-staðir* names account for 1165 of the *c.* 7870 recorded settlement names (Lárusson 1939:64-5). Similarly, the distribution of ON *staðir* names when taken together with *bólstaðr* is amongst the clearest indications of West Scandinavian settlement in the British Isles (Fellows-Jensen 1987:286). Interestingly, as only one Christian name, 'Jon', is found amongst the specifics of this *corpus* in Norway (KLNM XVI:575), it can be assumed that the generic itself fell out of use before the Scandinavian Expansion period came to a close (*cf.* Thomson 1995:48-9 – see above).[178]

In Islay, farm-districts with *–staðir* names are amongst the least likely to border on the sea of any cultural generic (40% compared with an average of 53%). The average 'Land Quality' associated with these sites (4.79) matches the overall average but is lower than that for *–bólstaðr* (4.78) and *–land* (4.75) sites. Nevertheless, this figure might be considered misleadingly low. Although *–staðir* names occur over a wide area, there is a conspicuous grouping in the S part of the Rhinns – perhaps one of the least favourable parts of the island in terms of arable potential. This can be contrasted with Islay's *–bólstaðr* names – which have survived for the most part in tight clusters in areas of high arable potential. Despite this statistic distorting arable disadvantage, *-staðir* sites have a higher mean 'Relative Favourability' (3.5) than both the average and *-bolstaðr* sites and are noticeably larger in terms of 'Relative Size' (3.6) than most of the ON and all of the G generics studied in this section. This compares favourably to the findings on the generic in Orkney presented by Marwick (1952:234-5) and Thomson (1995:58-9).

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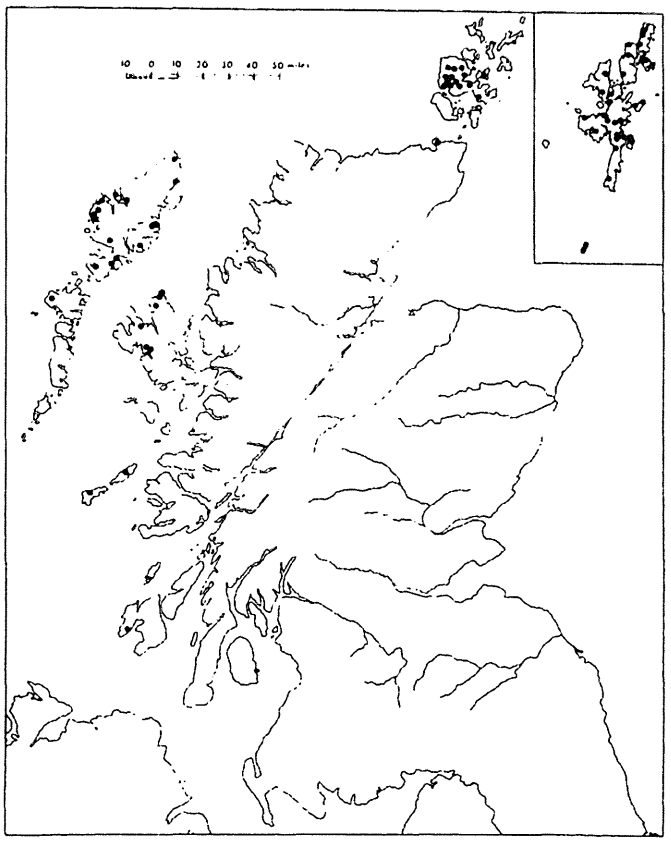
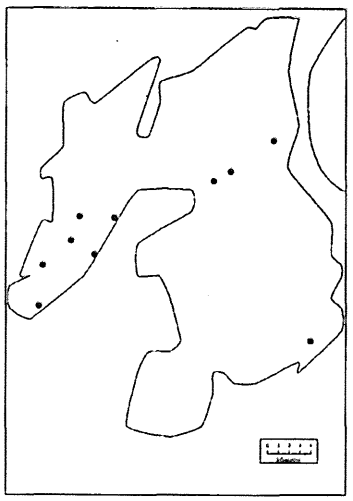
[177] Nicolaisen's (2001:114) distribution maps of ON *staðir* and *setr/sætr* (*ibid.*:115) show only one example of each in Islay. While Nicolaisen (2001:117) explains that this total is based on 'names appear[ing] on the Ordnance Survey one-inch map' and might not, therefore, reflect totals acquired from a wider range of sources, it is disappointing that his maps do not account for the 11 suggested Islay *staðir* names shown on MacDougall's map, all of which are clearly visible on the modern OS 1:50,000, 1:25,000 and 1:10,000 and first edition 6 inch to the mile scale maps – and could only be interpreted as *staðir* or *setr*. See also notes on *-setr* below.

[178] For further discussion of usage in other Nordic areas see, for example: Indl:77-8; KLNM XVI:575-584; SNL:294-5; Olson 1983:97-103.



–staðir names on the OS 1:50,000 map (Nicolaisen 2001:114)



Non-contrasted -staðir names on MacDougall's map

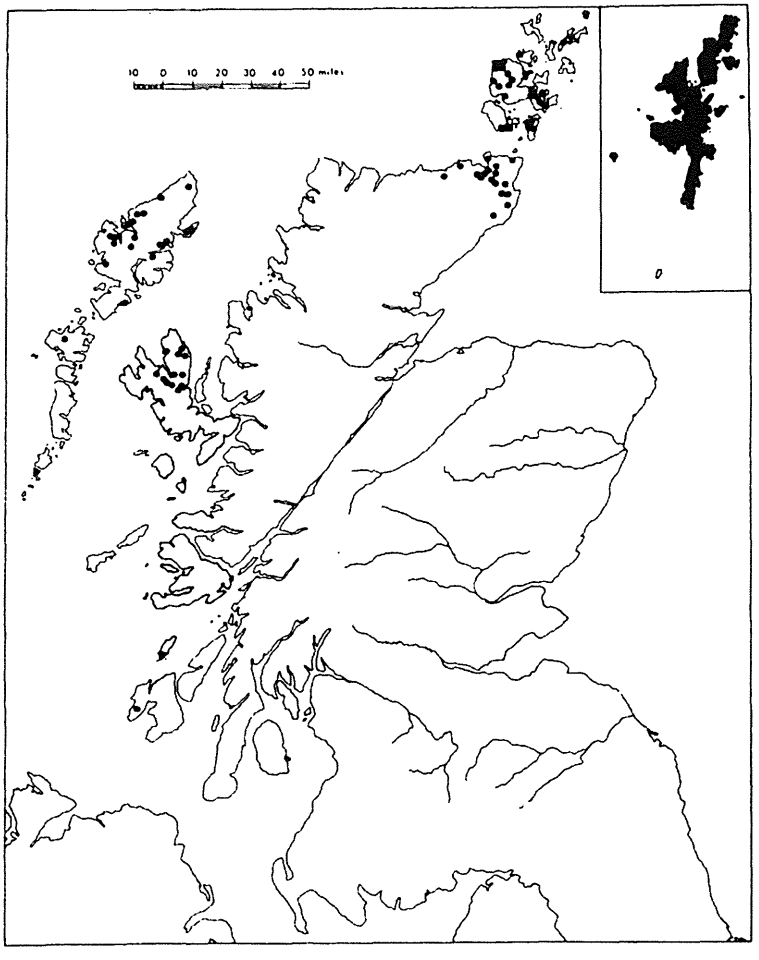
Figure 38: -staðir names

Like Islay *-bólstaðr* names, the relatively high concentration of *–staðir* names in a relatively limited area – in this case the southern part of the Rhinns – may point to a limited window of productivity. Unlike *-bólstaðr* names, however, the physical distribution of *-staðir* names is rather more disparate, suggesting perhaps that *–staðir* belongs to an earlier or less intense stage of settlement development representing, perhaps, the first division of the initial *landnám* before any further sub-division took place. Considering the popularity of this name-type in Iceland during the period of settlement, it is possible that its productivity in Islay was also restricted to the period leading up to the turn of the 10th century (*cf.* Nicolaisen 2001:124).

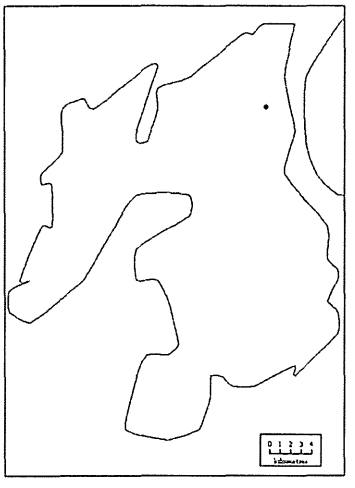
It may be noteworthy in this respect that Icelandic usage is limited almost entirely to the plural form. Þórhallur Vilmundarson (KLNM XVI:578-84) explains this phenomenon in terms of reference to a cluster of houses or alternatively to the sum total of dwellings in a settlement-district. As many Icelandic *–staðir* names can be traced to LNB and the Icelandic sagas, it is possible that the original meaning of this generic in its 'colonial' context was 'independent estate' (*lögbýli*) (Lárusson 1939:66). There is no reason why this could not also have been the case in Islay.

7.3.6.3 *-setr*

As only two ON *-setr* names – the contrasted pair Nether and Upper Stoinsha in Kilmeny – are shown on MacDougall's map and only one other – Erasaid in Kilchoman – is known from other sources, this name-type must be considered conspicuous by its absence. Given its place as the youngest element in Nicolaisen's holy trinity of ON settlement diagnostics, however, it deserves closer scrutiny here.



-setr/-sætr names on the OS 1:50,000 map (Nicolaisen) 2001:115.[179]



Non-contrasted -setr names on MacDougall's map

Figure 39: -setr names

Nicolaisen (2001:117) suggests that the Scottish *–setr* names date to a period of 'confrontation' between the Norse newcomers and the G speaking natives around AD 880-900, although 'probably nearer the earlier rather than the later date'. The significance of *-setr* names, or rather their absence, in Islay, however, will vary considerably depending on whether the generic in question is interpreted as ON *setr* or

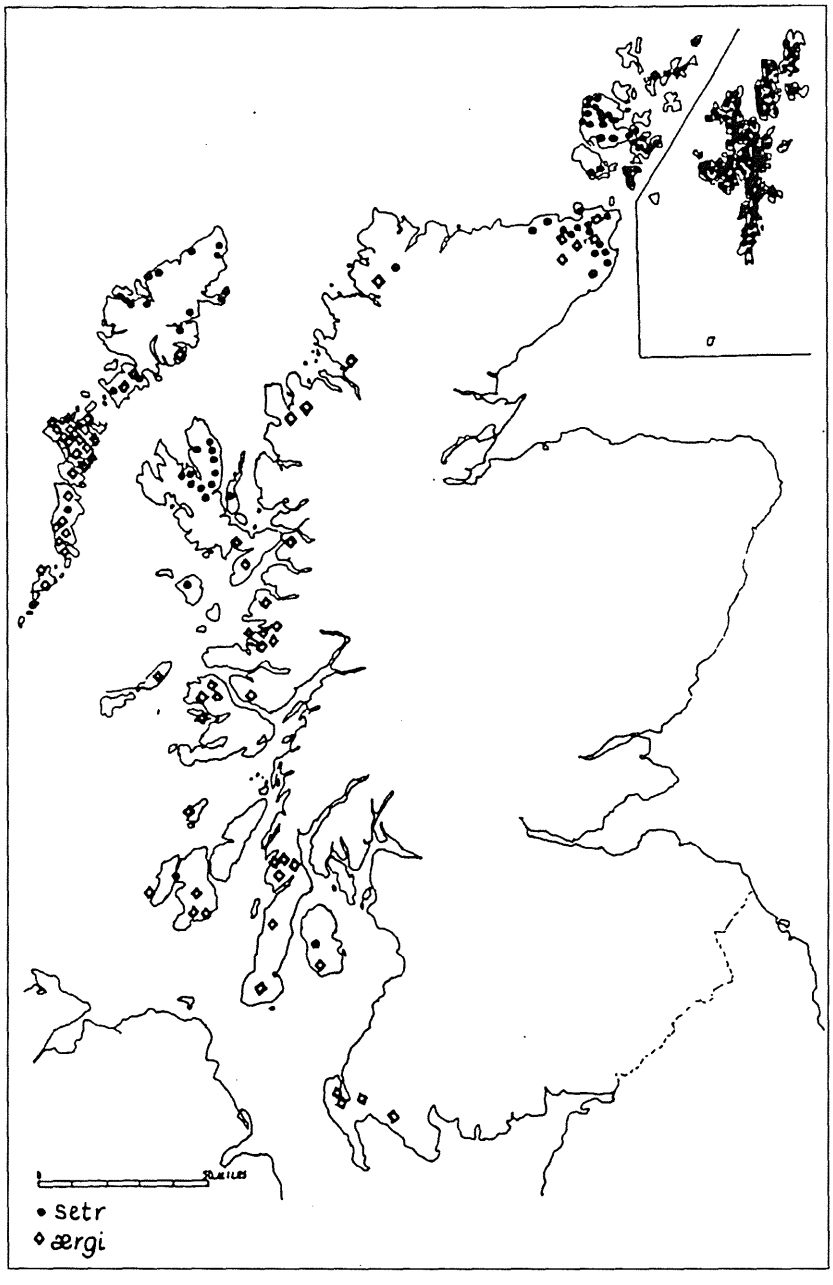
[179] Although this map shows only one dot on Islay, this appears to coincide with the farm-district of Kelsa in the southern part of the Rhinns, rather than Staoisha, Staoisha Eararach or Erasaid – all of which are shown on the OS 1" to the mile scale maps from which Nicolaisen's material is drawn. Considering the local pronunciation of this name ['kʲa:l.s'a] and the observations that Nicolaisen himself makes about G palatal /s/ in ON *–setr* names (2001:119; *cf.* Thomas 1881-2:242), it would be difficult to argue that Kelsa derives from an ON *setr* name. This particular oversight casts doubt on the distribution of the generic in other areas.

ON *sætr*. While both of these are likely to have originated as *denotata* for (temporary) pastoral settlements, they went on to acquire the quite different connotations of 'farm/ seat' and 'shieling' respectively. It is almost impossible to distinguish between these two variants on orthographical or phonological grounds alone (*cf.* Nicolaisen 2001:118). But where the name has a specific element, and that element reflects pastoral activity, it might be safe to assume that the generic is *sætr*. The same conclusion might also be reached if the farm in question were situated on marginal or peripheral land (*cf. ibid.*:118). This is how the distinction is usually made in Norway. According to Olav Beito (NSL:272-4), the fact that 900 or so of the 2600 Norwegian *-set(e)* names happen to be estate names, probably marks them out as deriving from ON *-setr* rather than ON *-sætr*.[180]

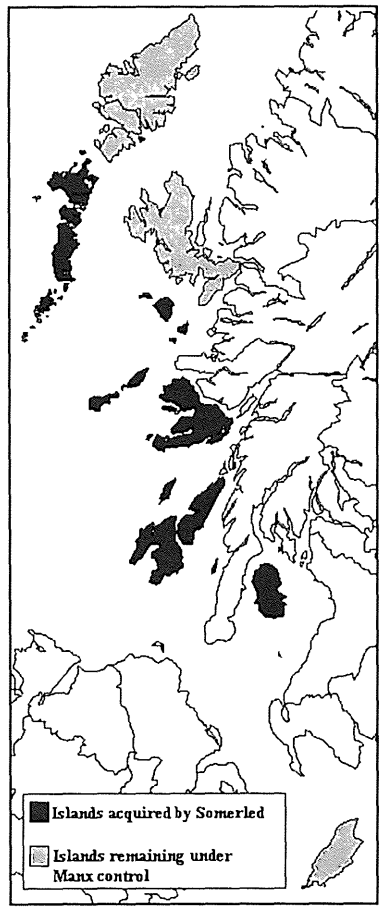
Although the Islay Stoinshas are situated towards the N periphery of Kilmeny generally and its low-lying land specifically, the fact that they coincide with an area of brown forest soils and appear fairly consistently in the early rentals as farm-districts in their own right points to earlier description of an arable centre rather than a temporary shieling and hence the generic *setr*. The same cannot be said, however, of Erasaid at the E extremity of Kilchoman. The land here is naturally peaty and boggy and while it may well have provided pasturage for livestock has never been considered a major arable centre. This explains the failure of this site to develop as a farm-district in its own right, why it came to be associated with distant Ballinaby in the early rentals and suggests origins in ON *sætr*.

It has been argued that the distribution of these name types in Atlantic Scotland reflects traditional theories on the penetration of Norse language and culture into the Isles (Figure 40). As ON *ærgi* is a borrowing form G *àirigh* (*cf.* Cox 2002:122-4), its higher density in the S has been taken to reflect a strong Gaelic cultural influence emanating from Dalriada – with the obvious implication that Gaelic language and culture remained the prestige 'norm' in the Inner Hebrides throughout the Viking Age, or that ON *setr/ sætr* had fallen out of use before this type of settlement became common (Olson 1983:219-220; Nicolaisen 1969:11). The fact that *setr* with its Germanic roots is largely absent from this area but common in the Northern Isles and Lewis has been taken to suggest that the effective centre of ON culture and language in Scotland was much further N. Although such a hypothesis cannot be completely discarded, there is an alternative and to my mind more convincing explanation for this onomastic split.

[180] See, for example: *-set* KLNM XV:156-61; KLNM XVII:710-12 & 712-18; Indl:74; NSL:272-4: Thomson 1995:60; Argi 1995:465-72 *etc.*



Olson's distribution of ON -ærgi & -setr names in Scotland (1983:216)



Insular parts of the Kingdom of Man & the Isles c. 1156 AD (based on Megaw1976:3)

NB: There are problems with the classifications on this map. Where, for example, are the dots for the two Islay Staoishas? These ON *–setr* names are well attested in the early records and present on modern OS 1:50,000 scale maps. Also, why are there so many dots signifying ON *ærgi* on Islay? Judging from their distribution, the ones included here are Airigh nam Beast, Arivoichallum, Airidh Ghuaidre and Arihalloch. While Arihalloch may well contain an ON loan-word (**Skalli*) and Airidh Ghuaidre appears to contain an ON loan-name (*Guðrøðr*), all four of these examples are clearly G *àirigh* names. They are not ON *ærgi* names. Conversely, while there are at least two possible Islay examples of this category – Corrary, Sornasairidh, and the no longer extant Calmansary (Appendix I) – none of these are shown on Olson's map.

Figure 40: ON -setr &-ærgi and the Kingdoms of the Isles

The two maps in Figure 40 show a striking correlation between the islands acquired by Somerled in 1156 (the map on the right) and the absence of *-setr* names. Although there are some *-setr* names in the Lordship area – including at least 3 in Islay – it could be argued that the majority of these are early, being

coined in the sense of 'large, independent farmstead' (*setr*), as opposed to the common later medieval *sætr* meaning 'shieling' (*cf.* Cox 2002:122-4).

While the absence of *–sætr* names from Iceland had traditionally been taken to suggest that their presence in Scotland pre-dates the settlement of Iceland – *ie.* that it ceased to be productive by around 870 AD (Olsen 1928:74) – the NW English examples in *-side* suggest it remained active as late as the opening decade of the 10th century (*cf.* Fellows-Jensen 1984:148-68). Considering, moreover, that the most common ON generic for shieling in Iceland is *sel* (KLNM XV:104-5; Jónsson 1907-15:475-8; Sveinbjarnardóttir 1989)[181] and that the Icelandic settlement pattern is known to have undergone substantial contraction in the later Middle Ages (*cf.* Sveinbjarnardóttir 1982), it must be wondered whether the majority of the northern Scottish examples of ON *-sætr* do not date to the period towards the end of Icelandic settlement expansion, rather than the earlier phase usually suggested. It might follow then that the process of gaelicisation resulting in the *ærgi/ sætr* divide did not take place until around the time of the MacSorley *adventus* in the mid 12th century.

7.3.7 Other common ON cultural generics

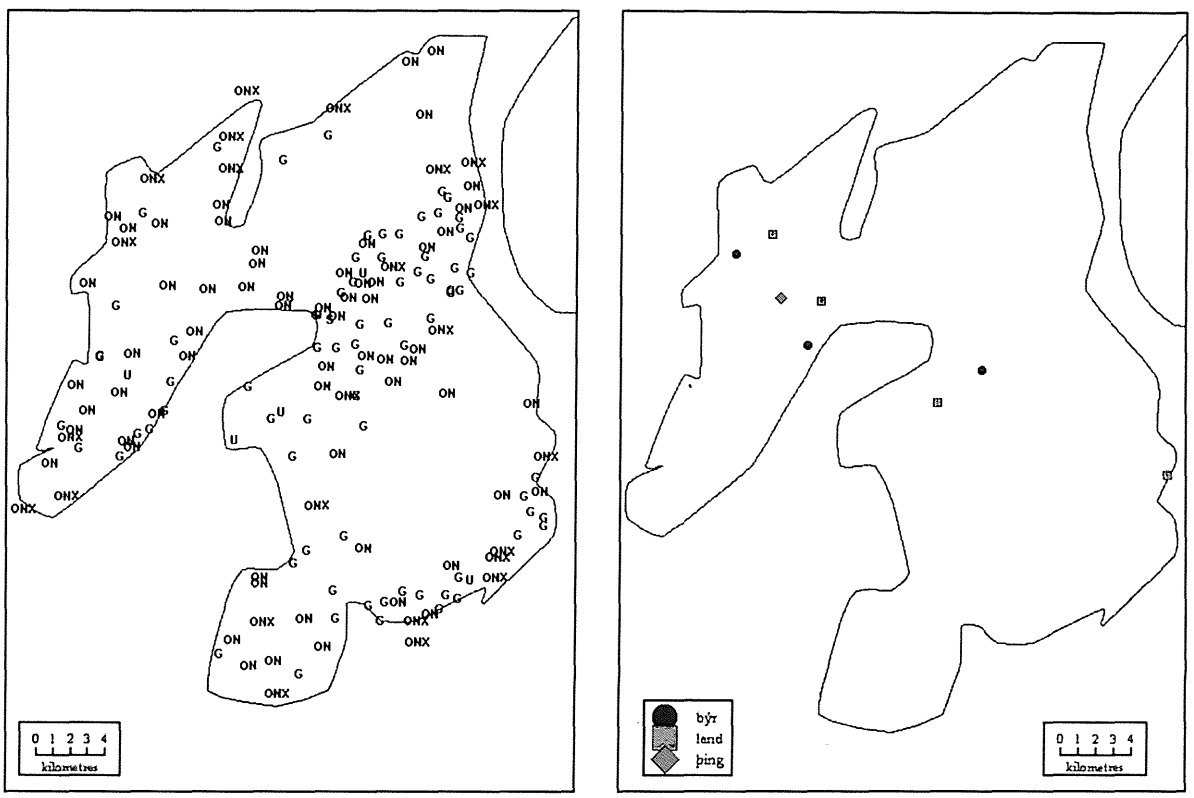


Figure 41: Other common ON cultural generics

[181] Although the original meaning of *sel* appears to have been 'hut', this was usually associated with structures in the *sæter* compound – *cf. Laxdæla saga* Chapter 55 '*Selen váru tvau, svefnsel, og búr*' (there were two huts, the bunkhouse and the byre). This wider meaning seems to be the most common in Icelandic settlement-names where *c.* 200 simplex and compound examples can be found. By comparison, only 30 or so examples are known from Norway (Sveinbjarnardóttir 1989:59-74; See also KLNM *op. cit.*).

7.3.7.1 *-land*

The four farm-districts with ON *-land* (n) names on MacDougall's map rank alongside the best cultural generics in Islay in terms of average 'Relative Favourability'. They also have a higher average 'Relative Size' (3.5) than farm-districts with ON *–bólstaðr* (3.06) or any of the G generics. Indeed, on first imptressions, Islay *-land* appears to denote a more prestigious settlement than might be supposed of its Orcadian (Thomson 1995:59-60) or Scandinavian counterparts (Særheim 2003:1-18).

It has been suggested that the Scandinavian examples of this generic tend to denote secondary farms and possible origins therefore in field-names (Særheim 2003). The medieval tax records of Jæren and Dalane, for example, show that farms with *-land* names paid less tax on average than those in *-heim*, *-vin* and *-stad* (Særheim 2003:12). As Særheim goes on to point out, however, '[t]here are [...] great variations within the land group. Many farms are small and registered with low tax figures, while some big and central farms have high figures'.[182] There is no reason, therefore, why the semantic associations of Islay *-land* could not have come from Norwegian localities where the generic was attached to prestigious farms. Indeed, there are reasons to suspect that the same might also have been true in Orkney. That Orkney *land* continued to be understood and used by speakers of Norn, Scots and English after the Norse period allows for an extended period of productivity during which the semantic associations may well have changed (Thomson 1995:59-60). It is no doubt significant in this respect that many of the Orkney *-land* names denote tunships, an observation that led Marwick (1952:232) to speculate that 'they are without doubt very early and venerable settlements. And yet – not I think the earliest!'.

It may also be significant that despite the prevalence of this name-type in SW Norway – particularly the Telemark-Agder area (NSL:199) – and the Northern Isles, it is rare in the Hebrides. Its presence in Islay might therefore point to closer associations with the Northern Isles in terms of the chronology and nature of norsification than were previously supposed – *ie.* that Islay was the focus of earlier and more intensive Norse settlement than, for example, Lewis.

7.3.7.2 *-býr*

According to Per Hovda (KLNM II:381-9 at 381) the Scandinavian place-name element *-by* shares its root with that of the West Norse verb *búa*, 'to prepare, make ready', suggesting a likely original meaning of 'land which has been prepared for use'. Although common throughout Norway, where it has enjoyed a long period of productivity,[183] this element manifests in two different forms: West Norse *bær* (m) – in Vestlandet, Agder, Telemark, those valleys to the east of the central mountains which lie closest to Vestlandet and Nord-Norge – and East Norse *býr* (m) – in Austlandet and Trøndelagsfylka (KLNM II:387). While West Norse *bær* is the type normally encountered in Iceland – where it is present in *c.* 174 examples (KLNM II:385) – the Northern Isles (*cf.* Marwick 1952:240-8; Thomson 1995:53-5) and Man –

[182] For further discussion of this generic, see, for example: Indl:63-4; KLNM X:193-201; SNL:199-200; Marwick 1952:231-2; Thomson 1995:59-60; Særheim 2003:1-18.

[183] It has been argued that certain Norwegian examples of this name-type date to the 7th and 8th centuries AD (KLNM II:382).

where many of the farm-names of this type have since been transferred to districts – East Norse *býr* prevails in the Danelaw area of England – with between 200 and 300 examples known from Lincolnshire alone (KLNM II:385). The distribution of these two variants has traditionally been taken as an indication of the extent of 'Norwegian' and 'Danish' zones of influence in the British Isles (*cf.* Fellows-Jensen 1987:35-60).

Farms with *-by* names tend to be large and valuable wherever they are found, and Islay is no exception. While the Islay farm-districts with this generic may have a slightly lower than average 'Land Quality' (4.33 as opposed to 4.7), they are amongst the largest farm-districts on MacDougall's map in terms of 'Relative Size' (4) and amongst the best of any cultural generics in terms of 'Relative Favourability' (3.5).

Only three examples of this name-type have been identified in the current survey of Islay settlement-name – Conisby, Neraby and Ballinaby. Working on the assumption that Islay *-by* names would derive from the West Norse *bær* familiar from West Norwegian and Icelandic usage, Per Sveaas Anderson (1991:143-7) suggested that Barr and Lorgba should also be added to this list. While it is clear from both local pronunciation and context that neither Barr nor Lorgba are in fact ON *bær* names, it could be argued that the same is, in fact, also true of the more definite members of this category. Considering the early forms and local pronunciation of these names, it seems more likely that they preserve an East Norse *býr* rather than a West Norse *bær*. This observation has fascinating implications for the island's settlement history.

Sveaas Andersen (1991:147), was probably correct in seeing this name-type as indicative of land-taking as opposed to land-division. Rather than seeing the *höfðingjar* behind this process as Danish, it could be argued that they represent a phase of settlement or political reorganisation originating in either the Oslofjord or Trøndelagen areas of Norway or the corridor of land which links them together. As is made clear in Appendix I, many Islay farm-names have exact cognates in the Trøndelag area. The form of the specific element in Corsapool, for example, from ON *kross* (see above) could be explained as post-Norse metathesis. It should be noted, however, that this form is actually particularly common in the E of Norway (*cf.* 'Korsfjorden' *etc.* in NSL:189). This in turn might allow us to link their coinage in Islay, with certain political developments recorded in the later medieval Icelandic and Norwegian sources – such as the expansionist activities of Harald Hárfagr in the late 9th century, the 'sons of Harald' in the second half of the 10th century, or Ólafr Tyrggvason around the turn of the 11th.

7.3.7.3 *-þing*

The survey presented in Appendix I revealed one possible example of the ON generic *þing* (n) hidden in the seemingly unlikely 'host-name' of Sunderland in Kilchoman. While this single example does not allow for convincing statistical analysis, the semantic importance of the generic is such that it deserves at least rudimentary coverage here.

ON *þing* (n) was the standard appellative for any (legally constituted) assembly of 'free-men' with legislative and/or judicial powers – from national assemblies such as the Icelandic *Alþing* (KLNM I:123-6), to smaller, regional and even local affairs.[184] Although the standard appellative for the place at which these assemblies took place was *þingvöllr*, 'assembly field', the names of the legislative bodies themselves would vary from district to distict: *eg.* Frostating or Steiga(r)ting in Norway (KLNM XVIII:379) or the Delting, Aithsting, Lunnasting, Nesting and Sandsting, which account for roughly half the parish names in 'Mainland' Shetland (Jakobsen 1936:125).

Given the regional nature of these entities, it is perhaps not surprising that only generalised designations such as **Þingvöllr* (sg.), **Þingvellir* (pl.); **Þingshaug* and **Lögberg* tend to survive in place-names: *eg.* 'de Loch o' Tingwall' near Scalloway in the parish of Tingwall on Mainland, Shetland (Jakobsen 1936:125) or Lögberg at Þingvellir in Árnessýsla in Iceland. But even these name-types are comparatively rare. In 1993, Gillian Fellows-Jensen (pp.53-67) was able to identify just 11 examples of '*Tingwall, Dingwall and Thingwall*' in the British Isles, concluding that the vast majority represented sites at which 'legal assemblies continued to be held for centuries, even after the Scandinavian language had dropped out of use' (*ibid.*:64-5) – the example *par excellence* being the traditional site of the Manx parliament at Tynwald hill. That such a name has survived in Islay – which is likely to have become thoroughly Gaelic by the late 12th century – but without remaining an important administrative centre, is highly significant.

Although the 'Relative Size' (4) of Sunderland is matched only by the island's *–byr* districts, the fact that its 'Land Quality' (4) and 'Relative Favourability' (3) are lower than the overall average (4.7 and 3.28) might suggest that it was considered marginal. A perceived marginality might explain its subsequent failure to develop into a regional centre. But as it is not unkown for *þing* sites to be purposefully liminal in terms of location, it is possible that this development represents a (deliberate) shift of prestige focus – perhaps following the MacSorley acquisition of the island. This might also explain the co-existance of two apparently different generics in the written forms and local pronunciation of Sunderland.

The specific element in a given *þing* name is generally taken from the name of an important farm or natural feature within its boundaries. Gulating in W Norway, for example, took its specifying agent from the fjord-name Gulen (ON *Guli* (m)) (KLNM XVIII:379) and Sandsting in Mainland, Shetland, from the settlement of Sand (ON *Sandr* (m)) (Jakobsen 1936:125). A similar development in Islay would explain the discrepancy between the written forms and local pronunciation of Sunderland. While the name of the farm could be seen as ON **Sjóvarland*, 'the farm by/of the lake' or perhaps **Sjónarland* 'the farm of/with the view, it is possible that this has become conflated in local usage with the name of the surrounding district – ON **Sjóvar-* or **Sjónar-þing*. As Sunderland does not appear in the records as a territorial or administrative centre, it must be supposed that its use as such predates administrative reorganisation,

[184] See, for example: KLNM XVIII:334-71 & 374-87; NSL 314.

perhaps by the MacSorleys or possibly a preceeding Manx sponsored authority in the late 11th or 12th centuries. For the element *þing* to have survived in a by-name, however, presupposes substantial physical continuity in the local population, with tradition being passed down through word of mouth. This is in stark contrast to what the place-name evidence suggests for the transition from G to ON speaking community at the beginning of the Norse period (see also Chapter 8).

7.3.8 ON specific elements as chronological markers?

As will be clear from the etymlogies presented in Appendix I, there is a gross imbalance in the range of word material used for the generic and specific elements of Islay's Norse nomenclature. While it might be imagined that the significantly higher number of specifying agents would provide an even richer source of chronologically specific information, this has not been the case. In fact, as will also be clear from the etymological discussions in Appendix I, the wider range of potential Norse specifics has served primarily to complicate the processes of reconstruction and interpretation of Norse place-names. As a result, it is often possible to say only that a specific is likely to be norse, as opposed to what that specific might actually actually be.

One particular type of specifying agent which can be of some use in dating, however, is the personal name. There are a range of texts providing detailed information on the etymology, early usages and early written forms of mainland Scandinavian and Icelandic personal names (*eg.* NID; Rygh 1901). While it must be remembered that early sources are selective and that names or variant forms of them may have been in use without being recorded, there are a number of personal names which can, if used carefully, suggest a relative age for the compounds in which they are found.

According to NID (73-5), the male personal name Áskell, was rarely used in Iceland, where most examples are known from sagas and associated with the early years of settlement. As the saga literature also suggests that it was in use in Norway from the early 9th century onwards, however, it could be argued that Esknish in Kilmeny parish, from ON **Áskelsstaðir*, dates to a similarly early period: *ie. c.* 800 – *c.* 900.

The names Torfi (m)/ Torfa (f), on the other hand – either one of which might lie behind Torabus in Kilmeny – seem more likely to belong to a later period. Although only one example of Torfi as a given name is recorded in Norway, Torue Torleifssin *DN* IV 636 (1438),[185] the name is relatively common in Iceland from the end of the tenth century (NID:1037, 1038-9). Could this be corroboration for the late flourishing of the ON generic *bólstaðr* in Islay?

[185] The name does, however, appear in a number of Norwegian place-names, *eg.* Toruestad (1528), now Torrestad in Sandherred (NID:1038-9).

Similarly, the specific **Hundi* ('hound') in the names Cnoc Undail, Tundale and Braighhunisary,[186] if it is a personal name (*cf.* Chapter 8), appears to be a late adaptation from Gaelic Cuilen or Madadh. Apart from a son of Earl Sigurðr *digri* (ON 'the stout') Hløðvisson, called Hvelpr (ON 'whelp') or Hundi and the Hebridean chieftain Holbodi Hundason mentioned in connection with the 12th century Orcadian 'Viking' Ásgeirr Ásleifarson, the name is usually attached to individuals of Gaelic extraction such as the Scots king Karl Hundason (or Maddadarson) mentioned in *Flateyjarbók* and the Hundi of Hundadal freed by Aud the deep-minded in *Landnámabók*, *Laxdœla saga etc.* (NID:598). Interstingly, the presence of Norse word order and what appears to be a Norse genitive /s/ in Islay *Hunisary suggests that names were still being coined in a Norse linguistic environment at a relatively late date.

Finally, the specifics in the settlement-names Cragabus and Tokmal in the Oa could each be drawn from a range of names and common nouns (see Appendix I). If these were the personal names Kraki and Toki, it could potentially point to Danish influence, either indirectly in the areas of Norway from which the eponymous settlers may have come, or directly through the settlement of ethnic Danes (*cf.* NID:715-6, 1035-7). In the latter scenario, this might point to Danish influx during the early 850s when the 'Dubgennti' or Danes vied for control of the Irish sea with the better established 'Fhindgentibh' or Norse (AU 851.3, 852.3, 853.2; see Chapter 3), or perhaps in the late 10th century with the advent of the 'sons of Harald' if their connections with Anglo-Danish York can be substantiated (*cf.* Woolf 2004:99).

7.3.9 Conclusions on ON settlement-names

As the most common ON generics in the settlement names on MacDougall's map appear to have been used with much the same semantic connotations as elsewhere in the Norse expansion zone, it can be assumed that general trends and periods of usage will mirror those encountered elsewhere. Thus, the relatively high proportion of ON settlement names with topographic generics can be assumed to point to an early phase in the settlement process. The fairly even distribution of farm-names in *-dalr*, *-nes*, *-vík etc.* over the island as a whole is the first indication of the intensity and completeness of that process. At the opposite end of the temporal spectrum, the effective absence of cultural generics such as *-ærgi* and *-sætr* points to the relative brevity of ON name-giving tradition in Islay compared to the Northern Isles or presumably even Lewis. The absence of both *-ærgi* and *-sætr* names in particular suggests that the Norse period in Islay may have been winding to a close by the beginning of the 11th century.

The regular yet diffuse distribution of locally prestigious *-staðir* farms, particularly in the southern part of the Rhinns, may point to the first major divisions of the initial *landnám* areas. As such, these are likely to be early. Whether this reflects the activities of a second generation of settlers or the political wranglings of the first is difficult to say. The possible combination of this generic with the personal name Áskell, however, that we find in Esknish in Kilmeny suggests that it took place before the turn of the 10th century.

[186] None of these names appear on MacDougall's map. See notes on Ellister in Kilchoman and Kilbride and Àirigh nam Beist in Kildalton in Appendix I.

The tight concentrations of *–bólstaðr* names, on the other hand, in three main areas of particularly high quality land may indicate the fine-tuning of settlement, possibly in connection with a single political event. It could be argued that this coincided with a late flourishing of pagan Norse culture and tradition in the face of increasing powerful Christian opposition towards the end of the 10th century.

Two further sets of names, those ending in *–býr* and *–þing*, also have the potential to cast valuable light on the process of settlement development in Islay. The likely East Norse linguistic origins of the prestigious *–býr* names suggest that political vibrations from Viken or the Trøndelag were being felt in Islay, possibly during the reign of Harald *hárfagr* in the late 9th century, following the advent of the 'sons of Harald' in the second half of the 10th century or perhaps with the prozelytising activities of Ólafr Tryggvason toward the beginning of the 11th. While the one example of *–þing* cannot be dated with certainty, its presence points to the one time existence of a Norse administrative network and indirectly through its survival in a seemingly liminal part of the island to substantial continuity amongst the local population as it switched from being Norse to Gaelic-speaking.

A final point of interest is the general construction of ON settlement-names. Contrary to Johnston's (1990:14) assertion that many of the Norse settlement names in the Hebrides were innovative and 'only loosely based upon the "traditional" naming patterns of the homeland', it seems that virtually of all the Islay examples were created using a combination of commemorative[187] and connotative[188] strategies.

Of the 92 ON and ONX farm-names on MacDougall's map, 43 (*c.* 47%) have exact cognates in Norway, 19 (*c.* 21%) have exact cognates in Shetland and Iceland; 17 (19%) in Orkney; and 11 (*c.* 12%) in the Faroes' northern isles. Moreover, there were no names without close cognates – *ie.* where the generic and/or the specific were both common in their own right, albeit not together, but where similar constructions did exist (*cf.* Nicolaisen 1977-80:108). It would be safe to assume, therefore the Norse settlement of Islay, was carried out by 'colonists in a hurry' (*ibid.*:112) – perhaps following a mass plantation of Norse speakers on the island.

[187] A strategy whereby familiar, 'ready-made' names were simply plucked from the settlers' acquired onomastic vocabulary and implanted into the new landscape (Nicolaisen 1977-80:114-6).

[188] The mixture of commemorative and creative naming practice whereby names were created partly on the basis of appellative appropriateness and partly on a learned understanding of the simplex or compound names which 'ought' to be used in given circumstances (Nicolaisen 1977-80:114-6). Gardiner (1954:11) calls this name-type the 'disembodied name' – a name waiting to be applied to the landscape.

7.4 ON nature-names

Any study of Islay's Norse nomenclature would be incomplete without at least rudimentary coverage of the island's nature names. Although the scope of the present survey was limited to inland names on the OS Explorer sheets,[189] a more readily accessible overview is provided by the Islay Cultural Database (ICD).[190] In addition to numerous pieces of important genealogical, cultural, historical and archaeological information, the ICD lists just under 5800 place-names. When cultural names – including settlement names, street names and house numbers[191] – and classifying appellatives – such as 'standing stone' and 'dun' – are removed from this total, there remain in excess of 3000 nature names. At a very rough estimate, it appears that as few as one in six or perhaps even less of these nature names contain any ON elements. Closer scrutiny would no doubt reveal many G nature names to be dependent and therefore statistically distorting coinages. But this must be balanced against the likelihood that many of the potential ON names are in fact G coinages containing ON loanwords.

This broad observation can be compared with Cox' more detailed findings on the place-names in the Carloway Registry area of Lewis. Of the 2934 surveyed, only 128 were considered independent and unqualified ON names which could be dated to the Norse period. A further 1280 or so names contained ON loan-words or loan-names or both. As about a dozen contained English loan-names and a further 160 or so English loan-words, just under half of all the names in this area can be considered fundamentally G. Of these, there are numerous examples which could be considered potentially early (*cf.* Cox 2002:111-124). While Cox concedes that 'none of them can be shown without doubt to be pre-Norse', he does go on to imply that the number and distribution of potentially early names in Lewis points to a 'continuous Gaelic presence in Lewis during the Norse period' (2002:118). It must be stressed here, however, as Cox (2002:118 FN13) surmises in a footnote, that it is impossible to be sure whether or not all or even most of these Gaelic speakers were descended from the pre-Norse inhabitants (*cf.* Fellows-Jensen 1984:148-68). When using the number and distribution of ON nature names to help ascertain the maximum extent of Nose settlement in Lewis or Islay, it is not necessarily the relative size of the *corpus* that is important as much as the significance of the individual names in it (*cf.* Thomas 1876:503-4; Henderson 1910:503). While ON and ONX nature names constitute only a small percentage of the Islay total, these are usually attached to the most significant topographical features in any given district – the kind of features which would have been discussed and used as specifying aides in any kind of conversation involving the landscape. Take, for example, the west coast of the Oa. While there are numerous small features in the landscape here which tend to have transparantly G names, there are very few which could be easily located without detailed description. Of those which are, by far the most conspicuous are presented in: Port Alsaig, Frachdale, Maol Ghraisdail, Glen Astle and Giol – from ON **Állsvík*, **Frakkadalr*, **Grasdalr*, **Ask(a)dalr* and **Gil* respectively – all of which preserve ON topographic generics.

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[189] See Chapter 4, Appendix I and Figures 43a, 43b and 44 below. See also the discussion in the General Conclusions sectioin below.

[190] The ICD can now be consulted for a fee at http://www.finlaggan.com (accessed 27 July 2005).

[191] This total included dozens of settlement-names with topographic generics. It is possible that at least some of these were coined on the basis of pre-existing nature names or even simultaneously as *dual designata* (*cf.* Kruse 2004:105) and thus provide a potential source of distortion in the statistics.

The same is also true when it comes to river names. The vast majority of watercourses in Islay which are not denoted by simple appellatives take their name from the farm-districts through which they are flowing where the name occurs or through which they enter the sea – *eg.* Gortantaoid River, Dudilmore River and Margadale river in Kilmeny; Kilbride River, Ardilistry River and Claggain River in Kildalton Parish. When the *ex nomine* onomastic unit in dependent G river names is a G settlement name, the grounds for dating them to the period before or after the Norse *adventus* will be as strong or as weak as those for the settlement name itself. It must surely be significant, however, that the name of the main watershed in the fertile heart of the island, the river Sorn, appears to derive from an ON **Súrn(á)* or **Surn(á)* 'the rushing one' or 'the damp one' (see notes on *Surn in Kilarrow in Appendix I) and that many of the more distinctive river-names in Islay are based on pre-existing ON nature names. Thus, for example, we have Eas Forsa in Kilmey, from ON **Forsá* 'water-fall river', Abhainn Araig, also in Kilmeny, from ON **Árvík* 'the bay of the river', Abhainn Ath a'Mharchaichd, between Kilarrow and Kimeny from ON **Mark(ar)á* 'boundary river', River Leòig near Leek in Kilchoman, from ON **Lækr* 'stream' and River Drolsay in Kilarrow, from ON **Trollsá* 'Troll river'.

The coincidence of ON nature names with conspicuous topographic features is repeated fairly systematically over the whole island, even in areas such as SE Kilmeny where the names of the farm-districts tend to be G (see Figure 9 above). Interestingly, those areas which appear to lack ON nature-names, such as the Sorn Valley or SE Kilmeny, are also characterised by a more homogenous landscape with few particularly conspicuous natural features.

The survival of these names can be explained by Magnus Olsen's User Group theory (See Chapter 4). As prominent natural features would have been visible from numerous different farm-districts and most likely discussed amongst the inhabitants of many more, their names can be considered *bygdens navn* (names of the district). The preservation of these names *in situ* in almost every part of the island suggests that the island-wide *lingua franca* was at one time ON. This observation is not necessarily contradicted by the apparent lack of ON names denoting smaller natural features. This second type of name, which might have been applied to fields, rocks, hillocks, gullies *etc.*, is far more likely to have been the exclusive preserve of the peasants in individual farm-districts – *ie.* the name of an insignificant hillock on one farm-district is far less likely to have been known to those in neighbouring areas than, for example, the highest point on the Rhinns. These *gårdens navn* (names of the farm) with their limited, local user groups would therefore have been far more susceptible to change than their *bygdens navn* counterparts with their larger and more stable user-groups.

If, as seems likely, the majority of Islay's *'gårdens navn'* were largely appellative in nature during the Norse period, it is entirely possible that the introduction of a new language, *ie.* Gaelic, followed by several waves of G-speaking immigrants and a period of fairly radical settlement re-organisation, would lead to the eventual replacement of many ON names with G ones. As the relationship of the population

with the landscape changed and names were forgotten, both Norse and Gaelic names will have been lost. When the need for new names arose, however, these could have been coined in Gaelic or perhaps (Scots) English but not Norse – resulting over time in what may have been a dramatic shift in place-name demographics. The wholesale displacement of local populations during the Campbell MacDonald hostilities of the late 16th and 17th centuries in particular is likely to have accelarated this process considerably.

The alternative would be to see the extant ON '*bygdens navn*' as products of a linguistically dichotomised society where the higher cultural and political functions became the domains of ON, with menial every day tasks remaining the preserve of G. But if this kind of bilingualism were the case, we would expect to have seen at least a few ON names with G *ex nomine* onomastic units. None were noted in the course of this survey. And while it is possible that there are examples of this name-type awaiting discovery, it must surely be significant that not one of the farm centres indicated on MacDougall's map, not even in the most onomastically G parts of the island, is more than 1.5km (*c.* 1 mile) from a farm-district or a topographical feature with an ON or ONX name.

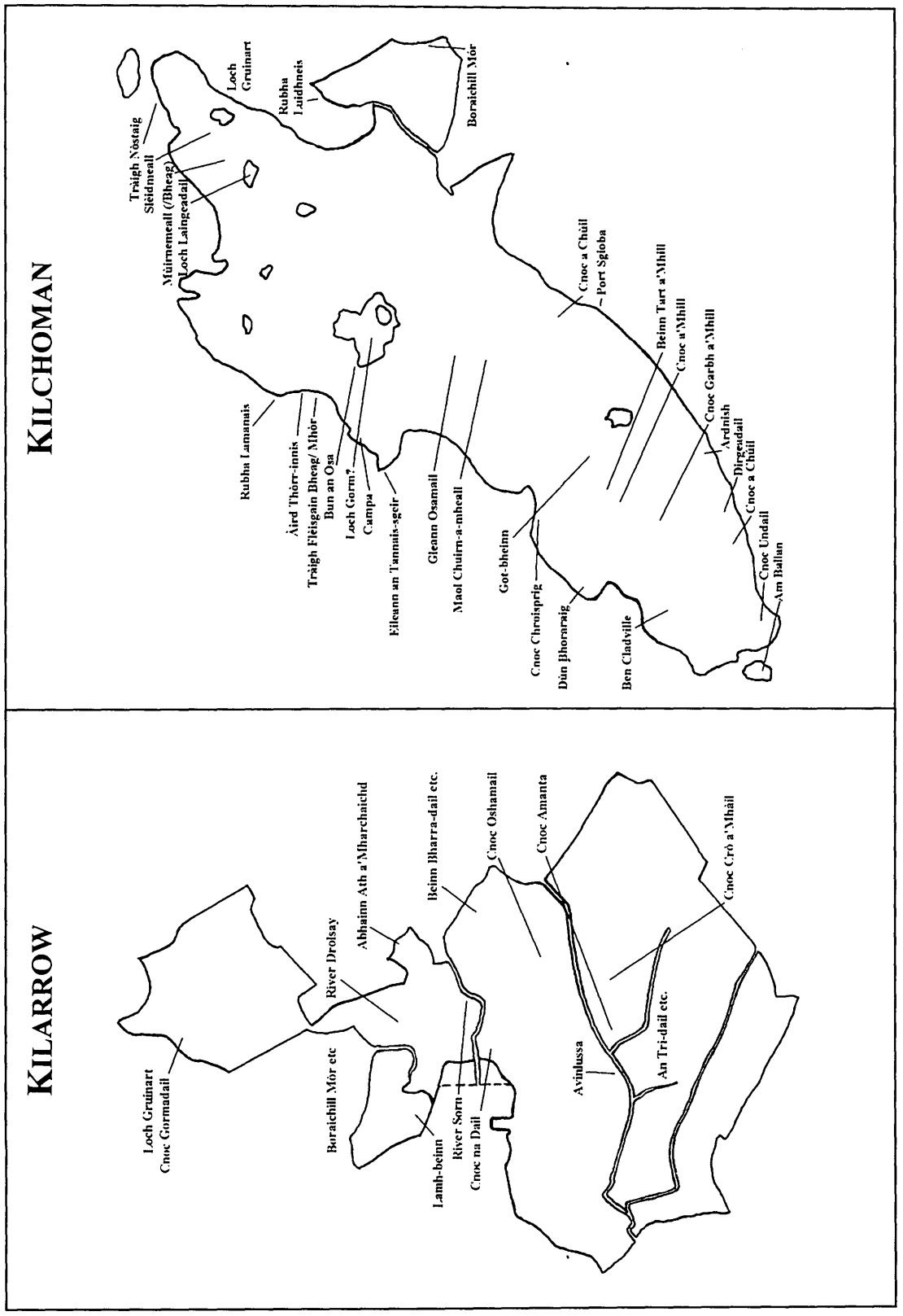

Figure 42: ON topographic names preserved in nature-names I on the OS 1:25,000 map[192]

[192] NB: The list of names shown in Figures 42 and 43 was derived from the OS 1:25,000 scale maps and should not therefore be regarded as fully comprehensive. While it excludes onomastic units with topographic generics which have been discussed elsewhere in this thesis in the context of settlement names, all of the probable ON nature generics are shown in Figure 44 below.

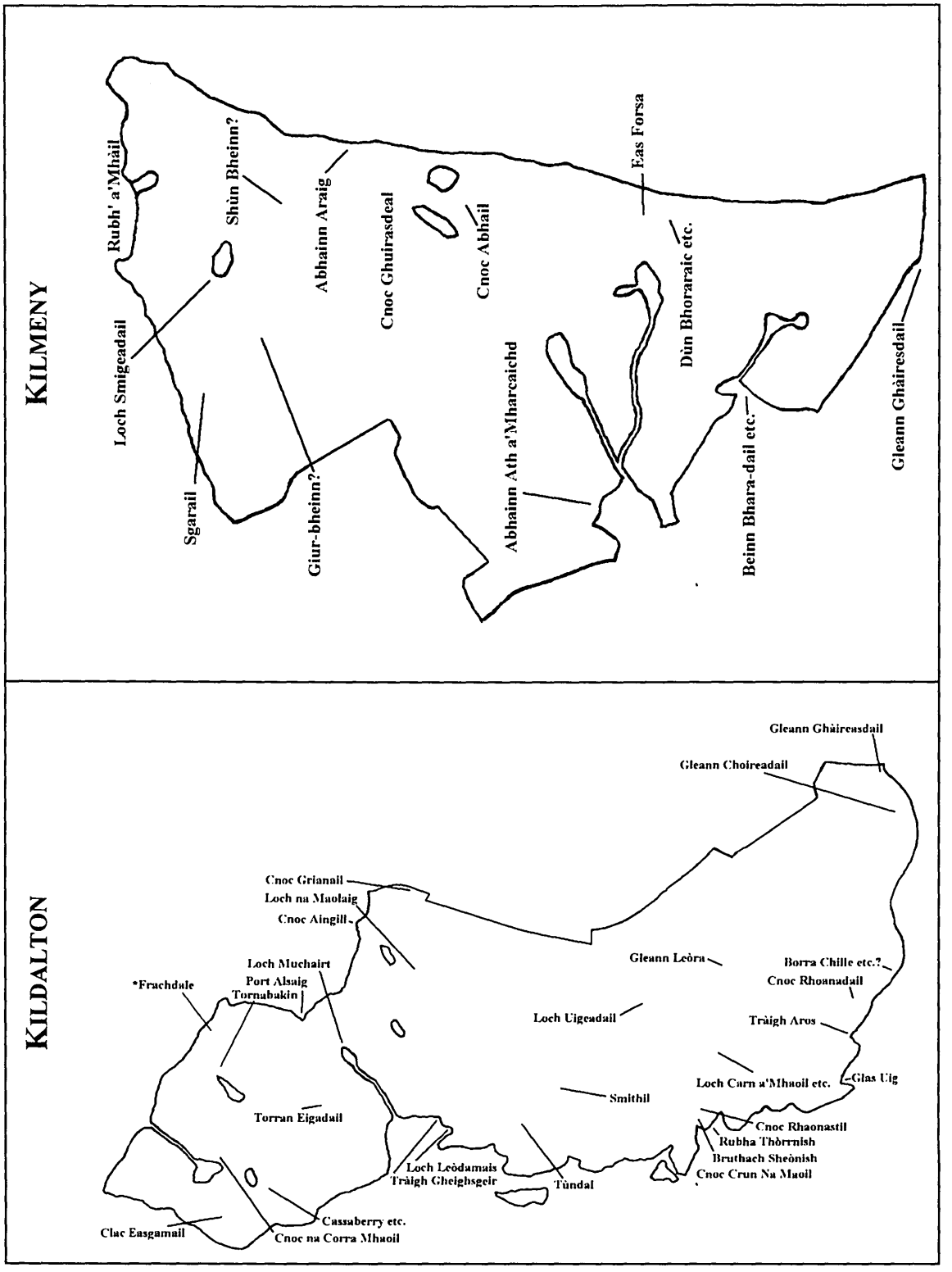

Figure 43: ON topographic names preserved in nature-names on the OS 1:25,000 map II

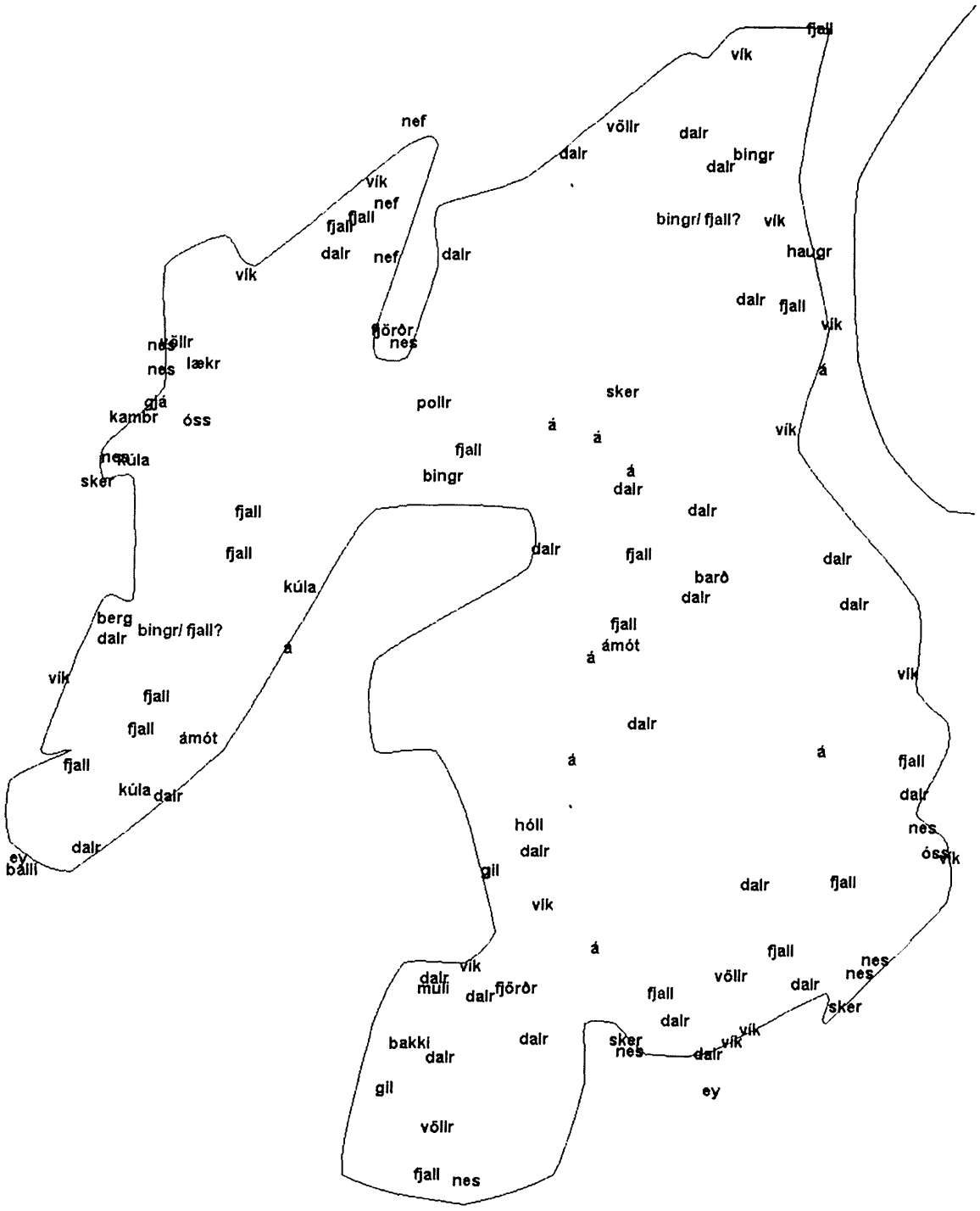

Figure 44: ON topographic generics in nature and settlement names

7.5 General conclusions

While none of the Gaelic settlement names on MacDougall's map can be proved to be pre-Norse, there are strong grounds for dating many, if not all of them, to the 11th or 12th centuries or even later. Similarly, while the majority of settlement and topographic names on modern OS maps can be classified as Gaelic, this statistic must be viewed against the ongoing and irrevesible demographic shift in naming traditions and nomenclature which have taken place since the Norse period.

That the Norse language user-group in Islay once covered the whole island is suggested by the distribution of farm-districts with ON and ONX names. But perhaps an even better indication of the universal extent of Norse language use is provided by the distribution of ON nature names. While these account for only a small portion of the island's total, they are extremely over-represented when it comes to the most conspicuous natural features – Olsen's 'names of the district' – suggesting that Norse was once the local *lingua franca* even in areas where the farm districts are exclusively Gaelic. That the names of less conspicuous topographic features tend to be Gaelic could point to continuity in the island's Gaelic speaking population at a less prestigious level. It is also possible that some of these had been adopted by the incoming Norse. Given the comparatively limited user groups of this name-type, however, and their typically appellative format, it seems more likely that these 'names of the farm' have changed since the Norse period following language shift and population movements.

If large numbers of G farm or nature names had survived from the pre-Norse period, we might expect this to be at least partially due to meaningful contact between the G speaking indigenes and the Norse incomers – *ie.* where thoughts, ideas and even name material were exchanged as opposed to, or even in addition to, physical violence and other unpleasantries. In this kind of scenario, we might also expect the incoming Norsemen to adopt certain aspects of the pre-existing nomenclature in their own coinages. Thus names like **Portmór+vík* or **Ballimartin+staðir* where G *ex nomine* onomastic units are incorporated into ON names would be commonplace (*cf.* Kruse, Forthcoming:161-2). Crucially, however, there were no such names on MacDougall's map and neither do there appear to be any on the OS Explorer sheets. Whether this points to the extermination or extreme subordination of the aboriginal Gaelic-speaking population by Norse migrants is difficult to say. As was discussed in Chapter 3, however, neither development would be impossible. The presence of substantial numbers of G settlement-names containing ON *ex nomine* onomastic units, on the other hand, shows that an established Norse speaking population had some kind of agency in the subsequent Gaelic naming practises.

That there was a transition from Norse to Gaelic speech is therefore without question. Assessment of the point of Gaelicisation, however, is complicated by the possibility that certain apparent ON elements do not in fact reflect the coining of names within an ON naming environment, but their adoption as loan-words into (the local dialect of) Gaelic. This is especially true of maritime features, where a number of common ON appellatives have come to dominate the Gaelic nomenclature – *eg. bodha* (m) from ON *boði* (m) 'breaker', *geodha* (m) form ON *gjá* (f) 'ravine', *sgeir* (f) from ON *sker* (n) 'skerry', *stacadh* (m) from

ON *stakkr* (m) 'sea-stack' and several others (*cf.* Thomas 1881-2:42-3; Stewart 2004:408-16). In a recent study of Norse loan-words in the current Gaelic lexicon,[193] however, Thomas Stewart (2004:393-420) has suggested Norse rather than Gaelic agency in the adoption of loan words into Gaelic. Stewart (2004:405-6) points in particular to the disproportionately high number of ON loanwords beginning /sg/, /sp/ and /st/. While word initial examples of these clusters are rare in modern Scottish Gaelic, those which have survived general linguistic developments tend to have remained non-mutating when other word-initial consonants might be lenitable. This led Stewart (2004:406) to conclude that:

> [o]nly those individuals who might be having some difficulty in their command of the grammatical details of Scottish Gaelic (the ON-dominant shifters) would be in a position to appreciate the relative 'ease' of invariant, or at least non-mutating word-forms.

It might be suggested that this points to a period of bilingualism in the dying days of the Norse period, during which native speakers of ON were forced to learn G to survive socially, economically and perhaps even literally in a world now dominated by powerful G speakers and their supporters. This raises the possibility that the transition from Norse to Gaelic speech may have been very quick, occurring perhaps over the course of a generation or two as the younger islanders strove to adopt the idiom of the new Gaelic speaking social elite. Whether these were Dublin or Manx sponsored immigrants from Ireland, as opposed to MacSorley followers from mainland Argyll is, once again, difficult to say. It seems unlikely, however, that the process can have begun much before the turn of the 11th century when Christianity became the official religion of the Norse world and the doors were opened to the institutional promotion of Gaelic (Chapter 8); or after 1150 when the arrival of the MacSorleys saw Islay emerge at the centre of the new Kingdom of the Isles.

[193] Presented in MacLennan's (1979) *Pronouncing and Etymological Dictionary of the Gaelic Language.*

CHAPTER 8: LAND AND TERRITORIAL DIVISIONS

8.1 Introduction

There can be little doubt that the Norse *adventus* in Islay was followed by sweeping changes to the island's nomenclature. The extent to which these changes were the result of radical political or even population disjuncture as opposed to a more diffuse process of acculturation might be further clarified by the study of territorial and administrative divisions.

For the purposes of this investigation, the land and territorial divisions of Islay will be divided into three broad historical groupings: (1) those of the immediately pre-Norse or Dalriadan period as implied by the *Senchus fer nAlban* (see Chapter 2), (2) the unattested systems of the Norse period and (3) those evinced by the rentals and charters of the later medieval and early modern periods. If the system implied by the *Senchus* were shown to have survived in its entirety into the post-Norse period, it could be argued that the Norse impact on Islay was mainly linguistic. For this to happen, any Norse incomers would need to have accepted the political *status quo* or engaged in sufficiently meaningful contact with the locals to learn the names, boundaries and practicalities of the pre-existing territorial and administrative systems. Considering the onomastic evidence for Norse-native contact discussed above, however, this seems unlikely.

If, on the other hand, no aspects of the pre-Norse system could be shown to have survived into the post-Norse period, it would point to a more complete political and possibly also population disjuncture. Bearing in mind that the administrative and territorial systems of the island might also have changed following, for example, the rise of Godred Crovan in the late 11th century or of the MacSorleys in the mid 12th century, this alternative scenario would be difficult to support unless traces of a fundamentally Norse system of administration were found in those of the post-Norse period.

8.2 The *Senchus fer nAlban* II

The earliest allusion to land and administrative divisions in Islay is found in the multi-period document known as the *Senchus fer nAlban* (Chapter 2). The section of this document covering Islay appears to record the division of the island into 8 named administrative or territorial districts, each of which is enumerated in terms of land-divisions known as *tech* or 'houses'. While these features are reminiscent of a rental or taxation list, direct comparisons with better understood fiscal material from the later medieval and early modern periods are perhaps unwise.

Although the *Cenél nOengusa* are assigned a total of 430 *tech* at the end of the *Senchus*, only 350 of these are accounted for in the list of 'districts' – not what we might expect from a comprehensive rental or taxation list. It is generally assumed, however, that the key to this and several other inconsistencies in the text might lie in the semantic re-evaluation of certain words and phrases.

The first of these is the phrase '*cét treb i nÍle*' which precedes the list of 'districts'. If, as has been suggested by Bannerman (1974:56), the '*cét treb*' part of this phrase is taken as a cognate for the Welsh *cantref* – a particular type of territorial division – it could mean either that Islay as a whole was considered to be a *cantref*-type settlement-district or 'extent' or that although this is how each of the following groupings was supposed to be interpreted it was only deemed necessary to mention it for the first one (Bannerman 1974:58 & 142-3). If, on the other hand, '*cét treb*' is taken literally as '100 settlement-districts' (*cf.* ESSH 1:cli), it might be imagined that this *treb* was the standard unit of land denomination known from the Old Irish law tracts as the *baile biataigh* or a sub-division thereof.

Popular acceptance of this second interpretation has led to the assumption that there should be a systematic correspondence between the number of *treb* and the total number of smaller units listed in the survey – the tech. Thus far, however, it has not been possible to make any convincing associations between the 100 *treb* to either the 350 or the 430 *tech* of the *Senchus* in a way that reflects known schemes and terminology of fiscal practise.

Ó Corráin (1980:171-3) has suggested a series of revisions to the text that render the need for correlation between these figures unnecessary. He argues that the phrase '*i n-ile*', which follows '*cet treb*' should be regarded as a late interpolation and thus removed; that the word '*treb*' itself should be seen as a scribal error for the word tech; and that the newly reconstructed phrase '*cet tech*' should then be read in conjunction with the first place-name on the list, 'Odeich'. In addition to this, Ó Corráin (1980:171) suggests that the lines:

> *Aitha cassil .xxx.*
> *In sin ceniul oengusa .xxx. tech callinae* (*cf.* Dumville's lines 32-3 above)

should be read as:

> 'thirty houses of Áth(?) Cassil (that thirty [belongs to] Cenél nÓengusa),
> thirty houses of Callan (?).'

If it were then assumed that an extra /x/ had been added to one of the district numbers by a later copyist, this would bring the total number of tech in the district into agreement with the figure of 430 at the end. How much faith can be put in such an extended chain of speculation, however, is open to debate.

As an alternative to this theory, Swift (1987:162) suggests that the name Odeich is in fact misplaced and that a total of 120 *tech* were originally ascribed to it. While this would render each district total a multiple of 30, the significance of this uniformity is not readily apparent. Swift's revision would also see the total number of houses listed in the survey exceed by 20 that given for the *Cenél nOengusa* at the end of the text. Her solution to this discrepancy is to see the 30 houses listed for the *Cenél nOengusa* in the survey as a re-iteration of the total number of houses owned by that kindred in these districts as opposed to the presumably larger number controlled by them. She argues that as the *tech* owned by the *Cenél nOengusa* would have been distributed throughout the other districts in order to better control them, this figure can be seen as a duplication of part of the various district totals and thus discarded. As there is no further

corroboration for this scenario, however, it must be considered unlikely. Moreover, as Bannerman (1974:57 & 132) has already suggested, the words *Cenél nOengusa* in this section seem likely to have stood in place of an earlier, district name.

The remark that the *feranna*, usually translated as 'lands', of the *Cenél nOengusa* were 'small' has also been the subject of discussion. Bannerman (1974:58) suggests it might be a warning/ plea to the authority for whom the *Senchus* was compiled indicating that, as the lands of the *Cenél nOengusa* were restricted to Islay and therefore small, not too much tribute should be expected. It could alternatively be regarded as an indication that although the lands of *the Cenél nOengusa* were small, they were relatively productive and that the kindred were therefore a force to be reckoned with. The interpretation of this phrase is complicated further by the figure of 31 attached to it. It has been argued by Swift (1987:162) that this was originally 'xxx', with the 'i' being added accidentally by a later copyist, and that it can therefore be regarded a reiteration of the number of *tech* listed for the Cenél nOengusa. But if *feranna* is read as *tech* and not 'lands' in this way, it would follow from Swift's previous suggestion that the holdings owned by the *Cenél nOengusa* in Islay are actually listed three times in the survey section of the *Senchus*! A further explanation, as put forward by Ó Corráin (1980:172), would be to see the last of these as an emended reference to the less significant lineage known as the *Cenél nOengus Bicc* implied by the Óengus Becc of the genealogy section – thus rendering the phrase in its current form something of a red herring.

Perhaps a more realistic approach to these apparent inconsistencies is to simply accept that the total number of *tech* listed in the survey section is different from the total given for the *Cenél nOengusa* at the end of the document. Given that the transmission of the *Senchus* appears to have been as a genealogical and not a fiscal tract (*cf.* Dumville 2002), the facts and figures in this aspect of the text are perhaps more likely to have suffered as a result of error and emendation. It could well be the case, therefore, that the district list is incomplete and cannot provide a total of 430 *tech.* The reference to the *Cenél Conchride* in conjunction with the *Cenél nOengusa* also raises the possibilty that the latter did not, in fact, control all of the landholdings on the island. If Ó Corráin is correct in regarding the phrase '*i n-ile*' an interpolation, it may have been inserted to stress the existence of other holdings outside Islay, some of which may even have come to be included in the list of districts.

8.2.1 Locating the districts

As things stand, there are only two aspects of the district list and the associated information which can be ascribed to Islay with any great certainty: first, that the island was divided, presumably fairly systematically, into an unknown number of *tech* units – perhaps as many as 430, but possibly less than 350; and second, that these were grouped into units of twenty for the purposes of raising a naval levy. The only way to verify the connection of all eight districts with the island and thus establish a minimum number of tech, would be to identify them in other sources.

8.2.1.1 Odeich

As with the *Oidecham insulam / Aithche* of Adomnán's *Life of Columba*, the Odeich of the *Senchus* has been linked onomastically with the Island Texa of more recent times (*cf.* Thomas 1881-2:250; Watson 1926:92; See Appendix I). There has been some debate as to whether the district of Odeich should be equated with Texa alone (Forbes & Skene 1874:47 & 325), the area around Kilcolumkill in Kildalton (Thomas 1881-2:250) or the SW part of the parish generally (Bannerman 1974:107). As Maceacharna (1976:30-1) points out, however, there is no reason why it might not denote both the island and the surrounding area. If so, it is significant that the name itself has only survived in the heavily Norsified form **Teksey* and even then in an outlying part of the region.

8.2.1.2 Freag

Maceacharna (1976:29-30) follows Thomas (1881-2:252) in suggesting that Freag, with twice as many tech as the next biggest district, could be regarded as the 'metropolis' of early medieval Islay. As such, he then argues that the easiest way of identifying it would be to locate its modern equivalent. For this he suggests Bridgend (formerly Kilarrow) – which became the island's 'business centre' in the 18th century. This conclusion finds a certain amount of support in the series of 16th, 17th and early 18th century references to a farm-district known as **Ochdamh na Freighe* (see notes on Daill in Kilarrow in Appendix I). While this name is no longer extant, Thomas (1881-2:252-3) suggests that it may be preserved in that of the Iron Age fortification 'Dun Pruchrais' (G **Dùn Pruchlais*, 'the fort of the den': now Dùn Bhruiclinn). But even if this is accepted, it must be considered significant that both *Ouchinfreich etc.* and Dùn Bhruiclinn are relatively insignificant and both are found in an area dominated by farm-districts with Norse names such as Daill, Eisknish and Skerrols. This might in turn suggest that Ouchinfreich is a late coinage and that its connection with the Freag of the *Senchus* is more apparent than real.

8.2.1.3 Cladrois

Although the name Cladrois is known from other pre-Norse sources (Chapter 2), these earlier accounts give no direct indication of its location. While it is generally accepted that the /rois/ part of this name, from G *ros* 'promontory', links it with the Rhinns of Islay, from G *An Roinn* 'promontory' (*cf.* Thomas 1881-2:251-2),[194] there has been some debate as to the meaning of the specific element /Clad/. Thomas sees this as G *cladach* (m), meaning 'shore', arguing, moreover, that it has been preserved *in situ* in the name of the farm-district Cladville near the S tip of the Rhinns (Appendix I). While both Maceacharna (1976:30) and Anderson (ESSHI:234) concur as to location and evidence, they do so on the understanding that Clad derives from Ir *calad*, meaning 'hard' or 'rough' and is therefore descriptive of the local terrain. In either case, however, only part of this name has survived and even then only survived through adaptation by speakers of Norse as part of a *fjall* (n) or 'hill' compound. As with the previous two

[194] While Watson (1926:495-6) derives the 'Rinns' of Galloway from G *rinn* (f) 'point promontory', he assumes on the basis of Islay's feudal ward system (see below) that the 'Rinns' of Islay derives from G *rann* 'a division'. The Rhinns of Islay was and indeed still is roughly coterminous with an administrative division. It is unlikely to be coincidental, however, that this 'division' alone should become known as **Rann* when it is the only one which consists of a highly distinct promontory. As such, the Rhinns of Islay is probably also best seen as deriving from an earlier **Roinn* in the sense of 'point or promontory'..

entries, there is no evidence for the use of this name in the major territorial, ecclesiastical or administrative division names of later medieval Islay.

8.2.1.4 Ros deorand

Most authorities, including Thomas (1881-2:252) and Lamont (1958:97; 1966:8), equate the *ros*, or 'promontory', in question with the S part of Jura. Maceacharna (1976:29), however, argues that this cannot be the case as Jura is a Norse name. While the other recorded forms of 'Jura' may indeed reflect Norse usage, as might those of 'Lewis', 'Harris' *etc.* (see above), it is entirely possible that this in turn reflects Norse adaptation of pre-existing name material. This difficulty aside, Maceacharna makes an interesting case for locating Ros Deorand in Islay.

If the name is assumed to be G and translated as 'Pilgrims promontory', it might be possible to equate it with the promontory of Ardnave in the parish of Kilchoman, which Maceacharna (1976:30) argues is derived from 'nemeton' – thought in other parts of the Celtic world to denote pre-Christian places of worship – or an otherwise unattested St Nemh. While Ros Deorand is no longer extant, the element 'nave' is preserved in three (almost) contiguous farm-districts in the area. But even if this was somehow connected with pre-Norse place-name material, it seems highly likely that this has once again only survived through adaptation into Norse, in this case **Nef* 'promontory' (see notes on Kilnave in Kilchoman in Appendix I).

8.2.1.5 Loch Rois

Although Loch Rois, meaning the 'loch of the promontory', is universally equated with the major body of water in the N part of the Rhinns (Thomas 1881-2:252; Lamont 1958:97; Maceacharna 1976:30), this feature is known consistently in all other sources as Loch Gorm. If the name of the farm-district, Sunderland – which borders on the loch – is derived from ON **Sjóvarþing*, 'the assembly place/district by the lake' (Appendix I), there is a possibility that the essential meaning and boundaries of Loch Rois were known to and possibly adopted by Norse incomers. Even so, the lack of any other evidence for an onomastic connection between the loch and an administrative or territorial division suggests that it did not survive into the post-Norse period.

8.2.1.6 Ardhes

If, as seems likely, this name is Gaelic, it could be translated as 'height of hes [bes in other readings]'. As the SE part of Kilmeny parish was previously known as the 'Herries' (1832; see below), which is popularly explained as G **Na Hearradh* 'the heights' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:31), it has become standard practise to draw a connection between the two. Given the popular acceptance that 'Herries' is also ultimately Norse (*loc. cit.*), Maceacharna's (*loc. cit.*) suggestion that the 'height' in question might be Dùn Bhoraraic (189m) warrants further attention.

The 'broch' of Dùn Bhoraraic, which happens to be the only identified example of this type in Islay (Chapter 2), is situated at the heart of the most onomastically Gaelic part of MacDougall's map. Perhaps significantly, this area of relatively good arable land forms the compact core of the collection of Church holdings known in the charter of 1617 as the Tenandry of Lossit (see Chapter 7). It is also adjacent to the later medieval Lordship centre Finlaggan and faces onto the central section of the Sound of Islay – an important staging post for MacDonald fleets in the later Middle Ages. If as seems likely, the area around Dùn Bhoraraic corresponded corresponded to an important territorial district in the Iron Age and was later acknowledged as such by the Norse, it would seem equally likely that the name 'Herries' is derived from ON **Herað* (n) meaning 'administrative district'. There is no way of knowing if this particular 'administrative district' was the same as that denoted Ardhes. But if it were, it is doubly significant that the name of the district has survived only through adaptation into Norse and that of its possible nodal centre comprises an *epexegetic* G *dùn* attached to a pre-existing ON **Borga(r)vík* 'Bay of the fort'.

8.2.1.7 Aitha cassil

It has been argued that this name is preserved specifically in that of the fort, Dùn Athad, on the SW coast of the Oa and more generally in that of the Oa itself – both of which Thomas derives from G *Adhbha, Adb a*, meaning 'a house or palace' (Thomas 1881-2:250-1; Maceacharna 1976:20). Thomas is also keen to draw analogies between the name Dùn Athad and the known Dalriadic centre of Dunadd in mainland Argyll. Although he concludes that the former must also have been 'a place of some importance, for it has retained its Gaelic name, although surrounded by Norse named farms', there is currently no evidence for the pre-Norse utilisation of this site (*cf.* RCAHMS 1984:264-5). On the contrary, none of its visible remains appear to pre-date the 16th or 17th century. Considering the strategic value of this part of the island – if for nothing else than a look-out point – there is every possibility that the name is also post-Norse and may even have been coined in deliberate commemoration of Dunadd in mainland Argyll.

8.2.1.8 Caillnae

While translation of this name as the 'the Wood of Nae' (*cf.* Thomas 1881-2:253) has led to association with Kildalton – an area famed for its native woodland (Chapter 1) – there is no corroboration for this connection in either the documentary record or the local nomenclature. Maceacharna's (1976:31) argument that it was more specifically associated with the eastern or 'Lanndaidh' part of the parish must therefore be considered circular. That 'Lanndaidh' should have remained the ecclesiastical centre of Kildalton until the 18th century despite its inconvenient location may well indicate a basis in an ancient territorial division. That it appears to derive from ON **Landeyjar* 'Land of Islands', shared with a long attested administrative division in the S of Iceland, suggests that this latter name has its origins in Norse fiscal tradition. There is absolutely no evidence whatsoever, however, that it was previously known as Callinae.

8.2.2 Conclusions

As can be seen, only two of the eight districts listed in the *Senchus* – Odeich and Cladrois – appear in other documents of the pre-Norse period. While Odeich can be traced with some confidence to the Kildalton area, the location of Cladrois is by no means certain. Although a further two – Freag and Loch Rois – have plausible connections with the central and NW parts of the island, three others – Ardhes, Aitha Cassil and Ros Deorand – can only be identified with difficulty. Indeed as there are equally convincing grounds for equating Ros Deorand with nearby Jura, it must be wondered whether others, including the otherwise untraceable Callinae, were not also located outwith Islay.[195]

With the possible exception of Freag, none of these erstwhile district names appear to have survived unscathed through the Norse period. If the traces of Odeich, Cladrois, Ardhes, Loch Rois and Ros Deorand suggested above are accepted, it should be noted that they have only survived through adaptation into ON.

This radical shift in nomenclature is enough in itself to suggest fundamental socio-political changes in Islay following the Norse *adventus*. Unlike similar changes in the more general nomenclature, however, this in itself need not necessarily point to large-scale 'ethnic cleansing' of the island. It could be argued, for example, that the presumed 'district' names of the *Senchus* were not primarily the names of physically contiguous districts but rather a series of abstractions for tribal land-holdings. As was noted in Chapter 7, the 1506 Charter lists the unspecified landholdings of the most important Islay families at that time. Although these have been grouped together for fiscal purposes, it seems likely from later sources that their constituent lands were in some cases spread across several different parishes. That a similar situation might be recorded by the *Senchus* is suggested by the format of the section on the *Cenél Loairnd*, where land-holdings are grouped by sept and not district. If so, it is possible that many otherwise unrecorded aspects of a pre-existing administrative system were adopted by the Norse in Islay, while groupings of tribal lands were largely forgotten. Thus far, the only indications we have for this system are the *Senchus*' references to 'tech' and their groupings into units of 20. In order to determine whether these or other unrecorded units survived the Norse *adventus* it is necessary to review the evidence for land and territorial divisions in the later medieval and early modern period.

[195] There may be a case for associating at least some of the district names in the *Senchus* with Galloway. Echoes of Callinae, for example, might be seen in the Forest of Nae; Loch Rois in Loch Ryan (from **Loch Roinn*); and Cladrois in the Rhinns of Galloway.

8.3 Later medieval and early modern divisions

The earliest post-Norse evidence for administrative divisions in Islay can be found in papal correspondence dating back to the 14th century (see below). As these letters were written by or about the holders of named ecclesiastical offices, they point to the existence of certain types of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Unfortunately, the content of this correspondence, which is mostly litigious, reveals little more than the names of a few rectories and vicarages. For a more detailed picture of land and territorial divisions we must therefore look to the series of crown papers and (local) rentals, which chart the changes in land-ownership and extent of Crown dues in the period following the forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles in 1493. Scrutiny of these documents points to the existence of two distinct layers of administrative division in Islay – the so-called 'quarterland' system and that of the parish. It is most convenient to deal with the smaller of these first.

8.4 The smaller divisions

In Islay, as elsewhere in the West Highlands and Islands, the basic agricultural settlements were 'grouped into [...] more artificial circumscriptions [...] for the purposes of fiscal assessment' (McKerral 1950-1:62). By the late 15th century, the smaller of these groupings appear as an integrated body of land-assessment, often referred to as the quarterland system after its largest known division.

MacDonald	Thomas	Scots	Modern Engl.	Fractions	£. s. d.	Merks
Cearabh	Ceathramh	-	Quarter(land)	(¼)	33s. 4d.	2 ½ M
Ochtobh	Ochdamh	Auchtenpart	Eighth	1 8pt ($^1/_8$)	16s. 8d.	(1 ¼ M)
Leor-theas	Leorthas	-	'sufficiency'	1 16pt ($^1/_{16}$)	8s. 4d.	($^5/_8$ M)
Cota-ban	Cota-ban	Groat land	White coat	($^1/_{32}$)	4s. 2d.	($^5/_{16}$ M)
Da Skillin	Dha Sgillin		Twopennyland	($^1/_{64}$)	2s. 1d.	($^5/_{32}$ M)

Figure 45: Land denominations in Islay c. 1500 – c. 1880

(as per MacDonald (1818); Thomas (1885-6:213); Lamont (1957:183-5; 1958:101-3); charters and rentals)

The earliest documented reference to the Islay quarterland can be found in the Crown charter of 1494 to John Maclan of Ardnamurchan, where it appears as 'quartam partem terrarum' and in divided form as 'dimediatem quarte partis terrarum'. From the beginning of the 16th century, these abstract units are often expressed as monetary values showing the 'extent' of the lands in question, with the quarter being set at either 2 ½ merks or 33s. 4d, depending on the units of currency being used.[196] By the late 17th and early 18th century, however, the early monetary values were themselves being used in an abstract sense. In 1741, for example, the holding of Stromnishbeg in the Oa is listed as being a 1 Merk land, yet paying £7. 16s. sterling p.a. in rent. Similarly, the nearby holding of Machrie, with an extent of 30 shillings, is recorded as having an annual rent of £29 sterling.

[196] As 1 merk was the equivalent of $^2/3$ of a pound or 12s. 8d., 2 ½ M was interchangeable with 33s. 4d. Where the merk is used, irregular or incomplete fractions of it are usually expressed in shillings and pence. Hence the rental of 1542, where the quarterland is expressed as 2 ½ M, but the Aunchtenpart as 16s. 8d. and the Leorthas as 8s. 4d.

As with all early administrative units in the West Highlands and Islands, it is important to remember that these Islay denominations or 'extents' were not measurements of area in the modern sense but rather indications of relative agricultural productivity (*cf.* McKerral 1950-1 & 1943-4; McErlean 1983:322) similar in certain respects to modern-day council tax bands. Despite the appearance of insignificance implied by the 'quarter' aspect of the name, it must also be remembered that the Islay quarterland was actually a fairly substantial holding. In the rental of the Lordship of the Isles from 1542, for example, the yearly dues of the quarterland holding are listed as 4 marts (beef cattle), 10s in money, 30 stones of cheese, 30 stones of meal, 4 wadderis (castrated male sheep), 4 geese and 4 hens.

The extents known as the Auchtenpart (G *Ochdamh*) and the 'Leorthas' are usually considered sub-divisions of the quarterland.[197] But with Old Extents of 16s. 8d. 8s. 4d. respectively, and dues of ½ and ¼ of those listed for the quarterland, these too were fairly significant holdings.

The units known as 'Cota-ban' and 'Dha-Skillin' on the other hand can be considered 'incomplete farms' – so small that the owners or tenants were unlikely to own a complete set of plough equipment (McKerral 1943-4:45). It should be noted, however, that the names of these units if not the divisions themselves can only be traced to the 18th century.

A number of other units are also encountered, albeit sporadically, in the early sources. With the exception of the 'cowland', which will be discussed at length below, these are mostly irrelevant to the present investigation.

8.4.1 The origins of the Islay quarterland

The concept of the quarterland is not unique to Islay. It is found either explicitly or implicitly in the fiscal traditions of large parts of Scotland and Ireland – albeit with different names, different administrative functions and different parent denominations. Thus we find the 'four-quarterland' unit known as the *bailebiataigh* in Ireland, the 'ounceland' (in various different guises) in *Scotia Scandinavica* and the *davach* in former Pictish and British areas of the Scottish mainland.

While the nominally fractional nature of the Islay 'quarterland' also points to the existence of a larger 'whole' (*cf.* Thomas 1885-6:213; Olson 1983:134), reconstruction of this unit on the basis of the earliest known Islay 'extent' leads to a value of £6 13s 4d or 10 M – which is substantially higher than the standard large unit of £4 or 6 M known from the same period in the Orkney, many parts of the Hebrides and the isle of Man (*cf.* Thomas 1885-6:200-13; McKerral 1943-4:39-80; Marwick 1949:7-10; McQueen 1979:69-74; Oram 1987:46-59; Williams 2002:1-15). There are, moreover, no references to any such

[197] According to McKerral (1943-4:44), *leorthas* derives from G *leòir* meaning 'sufficiency' and thus refers to the smallest unit of farm-land large enough for the tenant to supply his own plough. Lamont (1958:101), on the other hand, sees it as deriving from G *Leath-sheisreach*, meaning 'half-ploughland'.

'parent denomination' in the Islay sources.[198] Indeed as these same sources also lack references to the dependent 'ballyboe, tate, catron, sessaigh, gnive' *etc.* denominations familiar from Ireland – or (with one exception, see below) the 'pennylands' familiar from large parts of *Scotia Scandinavica*, the Islay extents have long been considered anomalous.

Despite the absence of this kind of evidence, any attempts to rationalise the Islay quarterland system must rely to at least a certain extent on parallels with the better documented systems of the surrounding areas. The best developed of these until now has placed central importance on the island's extreme proximity to Ireland and presumed status as a perpetual bastion of the Gaelic language and culture. At their extreme, the exponents of this Irish school of thinking assume that Islay's later medieval land divisions and the terminology used to describe them had remained essentially unchanged since its Dalriadan heyday.

8.4.2 The Irish School

8.4.2.1 McKerral's theory

McKerral (1943-4:45) attempted to link the Islay quarterland with the quarter of the Irish bailebiataigh. Working from MacDonald's early 19th century observation that an Islay 'ceathramh' or Quarter farm paid rent of £70 or £80 and that the going rent of land at that time was 4 to 5s. per acre, McKerral deduced that the (hypothetical) Islay quarterland farm would cover 280 to 400 acres; and that the reconstructed whole from which this quarter was derived would cover between 1120 and 1600 acres. He then compared this with the 1440 acres of the idealised Irish *bailebiataigh* suggested by the traditional Irish poem:

> Two score acres three times
> Is the land of the Seisrigh;
> The land of three Seisrighs, therefore,
> Is the quarter of a Bailebiataigh.

While McKerral concluded that the 'close approximation of this [area] to the Islay figure can hardly be accidental', there are two major difficulties with such a direct comparison.

First, the Irish acres implied in the ancient poem are, as McKerral (1943-4:47) himself points out later in the same article, some 25% larger than Scots acres and more than 50% larger than the English acres which would have been used by MacDonald as a British government agent in the early 19th century. So, even if the figure in the poem was a reasonable approximation of the Irish *bailebiataigh*, 1440 Irish acres would be the equivalent of *c.* 2200 English acres and therefore quite a bit larger than McKerral's reconstructed Islay *bailebiataigh.*

Second, and as McKerral himself stressed earlier in the same article, the quarterland should not be rationalised as a measurement of area but rather as an indication of relative economic output. Depending on the quality of land in any given district, the actual area covered by a quarterland might therefore vary

[198] Although Swift (1987:171) explains this development as a reflex of a 'restricted agricultural landscape' where larger units were simply not viable, the agricultural potential of Islay was regarded at least as good as any of its neighbours during the medieval period (Chapter 1).

considerably. This much at least is clear from Stephen MacDougall's 1749-51 survey of Islay. While MacDougall gives the total area enclosed by Proaig as *c.* 2818 acres Scots, that enclosed by Ealabus is only *c.* 234 acres Scots. But whereas Proaig is listed in the 1741 Rental as an ⅛ land, Eallabus is recorded as being a 6L land – or, in other words, as having three times the extent of Proaig. As the number of Scots acres per quarterland is consequently about 36 times greater in Proaig than Eallabus, McKerral's suggestion must be discarded.

8.4.2.2 Lamont's thesis

In a two part article published in the 1957 and 1958 editions of *Scottish Studies*, W.D. Lamont presented a detailed analysis of Islay land denominations. Over the course of 40 densely argued pages, he attempted to demonstrate a direct link between the property qualifications of various grades of free men in the Old Irish law codes *Uraicecht Becc* and *Crith Gablach*, the Islay land-denominations of the later medieval and early modern periods and the administrative terminology and territorial groupings of the *Senchus fer nAlban*.

Rather than concentrating on the 'quarterland' *per se*, Lamont based his theory on the sporadic reference in Islay's late 17th and early 18th century rentals to a mysterious 'cowland' unit of land-denomination. With the cow playing such an important part in the Old Irish law codes, as both a physical asset and an abstract unit of measurement (see, for example, Kelly 1997:574-5, 591-2), Lamont argued that these cowlands should be seen as remnants of the island's pre-Norse land-denominations. As such, he assumed that land assessed as a cowland must originally have paid one cow in tax per year and that each cowland must therefore have had a grazing capacity of seven cows. Although this led him to conclude that the occasional appearance of the Islay cowlands in clusters of 3, 6 and 9 was a direct reflex of the 21, 42 and 63 cow property qualifications of the Óg-Aire, Bó-Aire and Bruighfer classes of freeman in the Old Irish law-codes, it did not explain the major discrepancy between the earliest known 'extent' of the Islay quarterland and those of the surrounding areas.

Lamont's solution to this problem was two-fold. After further scrutiny of the Old Irish law-codes he decided to equate the Islay cowland with the 'seisioch' or sixth part division of the Irish 'ploughland', which he equated in turn with the quarter of the *bailebiataigh*. Having theorised that the cowland paid an annual rent or tax of one cow, he then set about deducing an early 'cash' equivalent for the ploughland to establish when the Islay cowland 'extent' of 3s. 4d. might have been fixed. Lamont drew particular attention here to the Scottish exchequer records from 1264-6 when the value of one cow was ¼ M or 3s. 4d. (*cf.* McKerral 1943-4:66). This, he argued, was significant for two reasons. Firstly, it was in 1266, following the Treaty of Perth – whereby the western Isles were officially ceded from Norway to Scotland – that 'Old Extent' valuations were first imposed on the area. Secondly, a price index which assumes four cows to the mark would have given his Islay 'ploughland' a rental value of £1 and his reconstructed Islay *bailebiataigh* of 24 cowlands a rent of £4, or 6 M, which matches the most common extent of the ounceland in most other parts of the Isles and the 'davach' on the mainland. He explained the discrepancy

between the extent of his reconstructed *bailebiataigh* and that of the four-quarterland unit – which would be 10 M – as the result of a regrouping and revaluation of Islay's townlands following Maclan's acquisition of the island in the 1490s (1958:90-2).

While arithmetically convincing, there are nevertheless a number of weaknesses in Lamont's theory. These can be summarised as follows:

1) Lamont's assumption that one cowland paid one cow *per annum* in rent and had a grazing capacity of 7 cows was based on a statement made by Sullivan in his introduction to O'Curry's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish.* But as Lamont himself concedes (1957:202-3), this equation was later discarded by Sullivan.
2) While the ploughland was the name given to the quarter of the *bailebiataigh* in some of the central and eastern counties of Ireland in more recent times, it is more often associated with the quarter or third of the quarterland (*cf.* McErlean 1983:317-22). In the highly schematised system of the Old Irish law tracts, for example, the ploughland is a third of a quarter of a *bailebiataigh* (Ní Ghabhláin 1996:50). If the extent of one sixth of an Islay ploughland were 3s. 4d., the reconstructed *bailebiataigh* of this last system would be 6 x 3 x 4 x (3s. 4d.) = 240s. or 36 M – impossibly large.
3) The Islay cowland terminology is not only late[199] but also unknown elsewhere in the Hebrides or virtually anywhere else outside NW Ulster in Ireland (McErlean 1983:317-22) – not what we might expect if it were a direct survival of the Old Irish law-codes. Moreover, where the northern Irish term *ballyboe* (approx. 'Cow-land') is used, it is applied to ¼ divisions of quarterlands units. Nowhere is it equated with the *sessiagh* or 'sixth' (of a quarterland), which always appears as a smaller unit. If this later Irish system had been fully operational in Islay, we might have expected the Islay *bailebiataigh* to contain 16 cowland units. But as the Old Extent value of the Islay cowland seems to be ¼ M, this would give a reconstructed *bailebiataigh* of 4 M – considerably smaller than the standard large nuit of 6 M found elsewhere in Scotland.

As a result, it is difficult to accept Lamont's conclusions on the ancient provenance of the Islay cowland – either as a concept or a term. It is not impossible, however, that the unit which later came to be described by this term had, in fact, survived from (pre-) Dalriadan times *in situ* – albeit through adoption into later systems.

8.4.3 The Norse School

Despite the proximity of Islay to Ireland, it would be unwise to summarily dismiss its connections with other neighbouring areas. Islay is located relatively centrally in the maritime region stretching from Shetland to the Isle of Man linked onomastically by their conspicuous Norse place-names. The commonality of naming traditions in this region points to a shared cultural heritage which could

[199] References to Islay cowlands are not only limited but almost exclusively restricted to the local rentals of the late 17th and early 18th century. The only earlier record is found in a Crown charter of 1506, which lists the '6 vaccatas terrarum de Proyayg in insula de Ile' (6 cow-lands of Proaig in the island of Islay).

conceivably have extended to certain aspects of land-division. As the 'tirunga' or 'terra unciata' of the Hebrides, the 'urisland' of Orkney and Shetland and the 'treen' of Man all appear to be reflexes of an original Old Norse **eyrisland*, 'ounce land' (*cf.* Marstrander 1937:423-5; Marwick 1952:209), this second approach can be termed the Norse school.

To the Norse mind, the 'ounceland' was the unit of land from which one *eyrir* (m) or 'ounce' of silver could be extracted in rent or tax. Multi-disciplinary studies by Marstrander (1937), Marwick (1952), MacGregor (1986, 1987), Johnston (1990,1995) and others have shown that these ouncelands were fundamental settlement units in the sense that they were usually topographically defined and contained the whole range of resources – both economic and cultural – needed to support a fixed size of community. Thus we usually find tracts of both arable land and upland grazing attached to each discrete unit, most often accompanied by at least one chapel in Orkney (Marwick 1949:9), Shetland (MacGregor 1987:455) and Tiree (Johnston 1990:259) or at lease one 'keeill' on the Isle Man (Marstrander 1937:412-413).

As there are no records of an ounceland system of land-division in Norway, Iceland or Greenland (*cf.* Marwick 1952:210), it is generally agreed that these divisions represent pre-Norse territorial units, which were adopted by incoming Norse magnates and adapted for their own purposes. It can be little coincidence, for example, that there is a virtual one to one correspondence between the distribution of brochs and ouncelands in Shetland (Fojut 1982:38-59) or that the ounceland extent – which appears to have been fairly consistent at around 80 s, 6 M or £4 in the early records (*cf.* Marwick 1949:7-10) – tends to correspond to the standard large units of the neighbouring areas. While this might also be the case in Islay, the absence of traditional Irish terminology raises doubts as to the level of contact and continuity that such a process might have entailed.

As in other parts of *Scotia Scandinavica*, the first medieval Norsemen arriving in Islay would have encountered a fully developed economic landscape (Chapter 2). As the more significant boundaries in this landscape are likely to have been defined by topographical features and man-made divisions, it would have been entirely possible for Norse incomers to adopt at least some of the divisions of an existing administrative system without preserving either district-names or administrative terminology. Considering that the recognition of pre-existing territorial divisions would have greatly facilitated the extraction of tribute from local populations, however, they are unlikely to have gone entirely unnoticed (*cf.* Sawyer 1976:109). In AU 798.2, we hear of the Heathens taking 'the cattle tribute of the territories [of Ireland]' – suggesting a rudimentary Norse awarness of native administrative districts from the opening stages of the Viking Age. Similarly, when the time came for Norse colonisation, it would have been expedient for Norse magnates to apportion land on the the basis of pre-existing territorial divisions. Once again, this need not have involved the transfer of nomenclature or fiscal practise but may simply have involved important followers being granted an important centre along with the attendant farms and amenities – *ie.* an area which might previously have constituted a *davach, bailebiataigh etc.*

Terminology aside, the only real obstacle to accepting such a development in Islay is the traditional quarterland extent of 33s 4d. Working from Maclan's 1507 valuation of Islay at approximately 124 quarters, this would translate into 31 of Thomas' reconstructed 'davachs' – a figure which seems disproportionately small when compared with the *c.* 200 urislands of Orkney in the late 15th century rentals (*cf.* Steinnes 1959:39; Marwick 1949:6) and the 216 Manx treens recorded in the Manorial Rolls of 1511-15 (*cf.* Steinnes 1959:43). If the later 'ounceland' divisions were originally based on agricultural productivity, it seems unlikely that Islay at *c.* 61,500 Ha would have one seventh the number of these units as Orkney at *c.* 99,000 or Man at *c.* 57,000. Even if the physical environments of these last two areas had seven times the agricultural potential of Islay, it is quite unlikely that the crude agricultural practises of the early Middle Ages would have been able to exploit that difference to the full.

The relationship between the Islay quarterland and the fraction of the same name is clearly not as straightforward as it first appears. Thomas' 10 M davach unit might not correspond to the standard large unit of 6 M, but this does not mean that there is no link between the traditional land-divisions of Islay and those of the surrounding areas – simply that the popular obsession with reconstructing the 'whole' implied by the term 'quarterland' might not be the way to go about doing it.

8.4.4 When is a quarter not a quarter? When it is an eighth!

Lamont's (1958:90-2) suspicions as to the provenance of the recorded quarterland terminology in Islay are heightened by the absence of place-names containing the G element *ceathramh* or 'quarter'. This can be contrasted with the situation in Ireland. In Connacht, for example, where the term 'quarter' was an integral part of land-division terminology for many centuries, there are scores of place-names containing the element 'carrow', the anglicised form of the Irish *ceathramha* (McErlean 1983:320-1). This generic is also relatively frequent in Manx place-names, where the *kerroo* was the notional quarter of the 'treen' (Megaw 1976:19-20).[200] Its complete absence from the Islay nomenclature, however, despite an extended period of Gaelic influence, suggests that the term as we find it recorded is a relative neologism introduced at a comparatively late date – possibly even towards the end of the 15th century when the keeping of detailed written records was hastening the crystallisation of the local nomenclature.

Perhaps surprisingly such a conclusion finds support in the islands G *Ochdamh* ('eighth') names.[201] While these point indirectly to the existence of the quarterland system, their limited number suggests coinage at an even later stage when economic development or changes in ownership led to the sub-division of quarterland estates and the need to create new names on the basis of (recently introduced) fiscal terminology. It also suggests that the quarterland system *per se* was relatively short-lived.

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[200] The Gaelic provenance of the majority of Manx *kerroo* names has been taken as evidence that the Norse take-over was of a limited, aristocratic nature and not concerned with society or place-names at a grass roots level (*cf.* Marstrander 1934:351). What the protagonists of this theory tend to gloss, however, is the enormous influence on Man, its place-names and administrative terminology from the later part of the Viking Age at least by speakers of Gaelic.

[201] Octamore, Octafad and the now lost 'Ochtocladesell', 'Ochtocorrich' and 'eighth land of Mee', in Kilchoman; Octavulin and the now lost 'Ouchinfreich' in Kilarrow and 'Octocarne' in Kilmeny. Although still extant, this last place-name has long since ceased to carry the prefix 'Ochdamh'.

By the early 18th century, the quarterland was used primarily as the basis for local taxation. The public records of this period preserved in Ramsay's (1890) *Stent Book* show that it was the unit upon which the public burdens known as Land Cess and Contingencies were levied. In 1718, the island as a whole was assessed as 132 quarterland units for the purposes of extracting this tax – each of which was deemed liable for £3 19s 4d. Although the total number of quarterlands had increased to 135 by 1734, this figure remained stable until 1834, when Cess was recalculated as a fixed percentage of the valued rent (McKerral 1943-4:45). That MacIan assessed the island at *c.* 124 quarterlands in 1507, points to a level of stability in this system which is invariably projected back into antiquity. But to simply assume that the later significance of these units in the local economy harkens back to the heyday of the *Senchus* is misguided. Not only does it fail to allow for the 600 years of potential change that separate the height of the Viking Age from the earliest records, it is\also a misrepresentation of what the early records actually tell us. Take, for example, MacIan's rental of 1507, the earliest extant document showing the total 'extent' of the whole island.

The **152** named farm-districts in this document are grouped into **111** different 'holdings' with given 'extents'. That **66** (c. 60%) of these 'holdings' are valued as quarterlands has been taken to indicate the definitive role of the quarterland in Islay's medieval land denomination (*cf.* Swift 1987:171). When examined in more detail, however, it is clear that this statistic is more than a little misleading. Of the **111** 'extended' holdings, only **38** consist of single named settlement-districts. The rest comprise groups. Reconstruction of the extent of the individual farm-districts in these groups shows that there were actually only **47** single-district quarterlands in the MacIan extent. By way of contrast, there were **78** auctenparts or 'eighths', **6** districts with an extent of more than one quarter and **21** with an extent of less than one 'eighth'. It is clear, however, from both earlier and later sources that some of the larger holdings, such as the Oa, are actually 'umbrella' terms obscuring a number of smaller district-names. This raises the possibility that some of the presumed quarterland districts were also comprised of more than one smaller settlement-district. It follows that quarterlands cannot be regarded as the most common unit of agricultural production in later medieval Islay. This honour goes to the 'eighth'. Interestingly, it is these eighths and not the Islay quarterlands, which correspond in extent to the Manx kerroos and the Orkney skatlands (Figure 47).

One way of rationalising the groupings in the 1507 rental is to see them as an attempt by MacIan to re-distribute the burden of Crown dues across the island's landholdings following his installation as 'laird' over the years 1494-1506 – presumably in a way which was most favourable to himself (*cf.* Lamont 1957:187-9). Attention must be drawn in this respect to the Crown charter of 1499. Although this charter represents the transfer of extensive tracts of land to MacIan – including one substantial holding in 'Swynfurde' (Sunart), one in 'Dura' (Jura) and 15 in Islay – none are valued as quarterlands. The smallest, and most common 'extent' in this charter, comprising 10 of the 15 Islay holdings, is the 5 M unit, the equivalent of two of MacIan's quarterland units. Significantly, the remaining 5 Islay holdings – with values of 10, 20, and 60 M – are all multiples of 5 M. If, as seems likely, these larger units also

functioned as tribal power-bases, it would make sense to see the rise of the quarterland in part as an attempt by Maclan to disrupt an older system of territorial divisions and break the power of the previous land-holders. In so doing, it would be easy for incoming clerks to attach the alien designation 'quarter' to what they thought were suitably large divisions, by analogy with the practises of other areas. The use of apparently intermediate designations in this way without supporting umbrella terms is not unkown in Ireland (McErlean 1983:217-22).

8.4.5 Pennylands

While it is difficult to equate the Islay quarterland terminology with a literal quarter of anything, that need not necessarily detract from the antiquity of the divisions it describes. This can be illustrated by investigation of the 'pennyland' terminology of *Scotia Scandinavica.*

The same sources which point to the existence of the ounceland system of land division, also record the use of smaller units known as 'pennylands'. While early rentals and charters usually show a systematic correspondence between ouncelands and pennylands, the nature of this relationship varies between the North (*ie.* the Northern Isles and Caithness) and the West (*ie.* the western littoral and islands). Whereas the northern ounceland corresponds to 18 pennylands, its western counterpart usually comprises of 20 pennylands, although a few ouncelands of 24 pennylands are also recorded (Lamont 1981:71-4). This apparently systematic division of ouncelands into pennylands – with both names alluding to known denominations in the silver-coin economy of early medieval England – led early scholars to suppose that the two land-units must also be integral parts of a unified system of land division.

Thomas (1883-4) explained the difference in the northern and western systems in terms of settlement era economics. While Viking Age Norway is known to have had its own silver 'ounce' of 412.5 grains the local economy remained essentially pre-monetary until the later Middle Ages. Thomas reasoned that the introduction of a systematic 'ounceland/ pennyland' system of taxation would have required a more comprehensive system of weights and measures and that the natural model for this would have been the English system of ounces and pennies. He argued that the early Norse settlers (in the Northern Isles) would therefore have divided the Norse ounce on the basis of English silver pennies; and as the standard Anglo-Saxon penny weighed 22.5 grains, this would have given an ounceland of 18 subdivisions, with the total weight of silver extracted from each ounceland falling slightly short of the 412.5 grain Norse ounce. Further W and S, and closer to the trade mecca of the Irish sea, it was assumed that the English silver ounce and penny were adopted outright, thus giving 20 subdivisions and a payment of 450 grains of silver per ounceland, a weight which both Thomas and McKerral after him, equated with the Anglo-Saxon ounce (*cf.* Thomas 1883-4:253-85; McKerral 1950-1:56; Lamont 1981:65-76).

As Sawyer (1979:108) points out, however, these attempts to explain the number of pennylands per ounceland in terms of the weights of ounces and pennies 'rest on assumptions about metrological stability that are anachronistic'. They also fail to account for the ounceland of 24 pennylands, which finds better

parallels in the common Ulster Bailebiataigh of 4 quarters and 24 sessiaghs or the fact that the only known Anglo-Saxon ounce during the Viking Age was the *ora* of sixteen silver pennies (Megaw 1979:75-6). While it is clear that the ounceland of both the North and the West contained standard numbers of abstract pennylands within their boundaries, it seems likely that the pennyland terminology was introduced at a different time and to serve a different purpose from the ounceland (see Lamont 1981 for a fuller discussion).

The relative youth of pennyland terminology, however, cannot automatically be assumed for the divisions it describes. Indeed, the various difficulties with Thomas' theory have encouraged subsequent analysts to seek origins for these divisions in the native systems of the pre-Norse period. Easson (1987:4-6), for example, notes that pennylands were not only better represented in the western littoral and islands than ouncelands but most heavily concentrated in the old heartland of Dalriada, suggesting a link between the 20-part divisions of the Dalriadan naval levy. But does this mean that the tech and the pennyland are different names for the same unit of division? Of fundamental concern here is the relative scale of the 20 tech group and the ounceland. This can be illustrated by comparing the data from the earliest Orkney rentals with that of the *Senchus*.

'Ounceland' (ON **eyrisland*)	
Northern Isles	*urisland*
Hebrides & Western Isles	*tírunga, terra unciata*
Isle of Man	*treen*
Standard 'extent' = **£4**; 80 shillings; OR 6 merks	
'Pennylands'	
20 'pennylands' per 'ounceland' in the Hebrides & Western Isles	
18 'pennylands' per 'ounceland' in the Northern Isles	

Figure 46: Ouncelands and Pennylands

8.4.5.1 The Orkney data

The earliest extant rentals of Orkney provide a detailed picture of its system of 'skat' or land assessment towards the end of the 15th century.[202] While later than the *Senchus*, these highly conservative 15th/16th century rentals suggest that medieval Orkney was divided into slightly fewer than 200 urislands consisting of 18 pennylands each (Steinnes 1959:39), giving an approximate total of 3600 pennylands for the islands as a whole. One Orkney pennyland therefore represents about 0.027% of the total.

[202] The Orkney rentals of 1492 (Sinclair 1492) and 1500 (Peterkin 1820) are said to be derived from a now lost *Auld Parchment Rental* (Peterkin 1820:24).

8.4.5.2 The *Senchus fer nAlban* III

The civil census in *Senchus* enumerates land-holdings in terms of tech. That all of the land-holdings detailed in the *Senchus* are listed in multiples of 5 tech has been interpreted by Bannerman (1974:141) as evidence of an undocumented 'quarter' of the implied 20 tech district of the naval levy. This in turn has lent weight to the idea that the tech system is in fact an earlier incarnation of the later medieval Hebridean *tirunga*, with its four quarters and 20 pennylands (see Lamont 1981 for a fuller discussion). Such direct comparison is, however, highly misleading.

8.4.5.3 Comparison

The *Senchus* lists the landholdings of the *cenél Gabhráin* as 560 tech, the *cenél nOengusa* as 430 tech and the *cenél Loairnd* as 420 tech – giving a minimum of 1410 tech for Dalriada. But given that the expeditionary strength of the *Cenél Loairnd* is said to be seven hundred men, with the seventh hundred coming from the Airgialla (Bannerman 1974:49; see Chapter 2) it is possible that some of these tech were also in the north of Ireland. One Dalriadan tech represents more about 0.071% of the total.

If the figures from the *Senchus* and those for Orkney are compared directly, it is clear that an individual tech, at *c.* 0.071% of the total, is a proportionally larger unit than an Orkney pennyland corresponding to *c.* 0.028% of the total. It must be remembered, however, that the physical area covered by early medieval Dalriada was much larger than that of Orkney. While the modern county of Argyll and Bute comprises about 700,000 ha, Orkney works out at around 100,000. Given the mountainous nature of much of Argyll, it is likely that the amount of agriculturally productive land was proportionately lower in Dalriada than in Orkney. It should be remembered, however, that once outlying areas and Irish landholdings are factored in, the Scots kingdom of Dalriada will have been even larger. It would be surprising, therefore, if the potential agricultural output of Dalriada as a whole was less than that of Orkney. On the contrary, if at a very rough estimate, we assumed that the arable capacity of Dalriada was around three times that of Orkney, the abstract size of the tech would then be around ten times that of the Orcadian pennyland!

It should be clear, then, that the 20 tech group does not correspond to the ounceland and that the tech does not correspond to the pennyland. If there is a direct relationship between the 20 tech group and the ouncelands and pennylands of the Hebrides it is likely to be on the conceptual level, in the idea that a large administrative unit should consist of 20 sub divisions.

The same logic can also be applied to the Islay material. If the total number of tech in the Islay section of the *Senchus* is taken at face value, and each tech taken to correspond to one pennyland, Islay's 350 tech would translate into a total of 17.5 reconstructed (Hebridean) ouncelands – one tenth the taxable total in Orkney or Man and once again an impossibly small fraction. Indeed, given the similarity in size of Islay and Man, we might expect a rather more even comparison. It may be significant in this respect that Bede surveyed the Isle of Man at 300 *familiarum mensura*, 'measure of families' (McClure & Collins

1999:84), which may be equivalent to the 'hide' unit which first appears in the 8th century *Tibal Hideage* (*ibid.*: 379 FN 84) – a figure which is very close to the 350 *tech* of the *Senchus.*

Norway	Orkney	Isle of Man	West Highlands & Islands	Islay	*Senchus fer nAlban*
	c. 99 000 Ha	*c.* 57 200 Ha		*c.* 61 500 Ha	(Argyll & Bute: *c.* 690 000 Ha)
				c.31 reconstructed T-U @ 10M OE	
	*c.*200 Urisland (1500) @ *c.* 6M OE	*c.*216 Treen @ *c.*6M OE	Tirunga/ terra unciata @ *c.*6M OE		
				124 Islay Quarterlands (1507) @ 2.5M OE	
Manngerd/ lide	*c.*800 Skattlands @ *c.* 1.5M OE	*c.* 860 Kerroos @ c.1.5M OE	Cearramh (4) @ *c.*1.5M OE		
					1410 tech
	*c.*3600 Pennylands		Pennyland (20)	Cowland	

Figure 47: Smaller administrative units in the Norway, the Norse colonies and the Senchus fer nAlban

8.4.5.4 Where are Islay's 'pennylands'?

Apart from one reference to the now lost pennyland of Scar in an Irish charter of 1631,[203] the term 'pennyland' is unattested in Islay. But this could well be because the term was never actually used on the island. There are reasons to believe that the familiar Orkney and Shetland pennylands are a Norse development of the 13th century (*cf.* Sawyer 1976:109) and thus post-date the rise of the Hibernophile MacSorleys in Islay. It might nevertheless be wondered whether some vestige of 'pennyland' terminology might be found in the grant made by Ranald, son of Somerled, to Paisley priory. This is said to have comprised 'in the first year eight cows and two pennies from every house in his dominions from which smoke proceeds; and in every succeeding year one penny' (Cameron 1832:125 & 148). There are, however, two problems with such an association. The pennyland in Orkney represents a fraction of an ounceland. If it were assumed that the tax on a pennyland holding was originally set at 1/18th of an ounce of silver, it seems unlikely that such a small holding would be able to pay the enormous sum of 8 cows and two pennies. In the Norse economy of this period, the cow (ON *kýr*) was the standard unit of value (Larson 1935:413). In monetary terms, 32 cows were worth 10 gold marks (*Gulaþing* §§ 218 & 223; *Frosta* II § 27). As the gold mark was worth 8 ounces of silver (Larson 1935:421), this would mean Ranald's notional pennyland unit paying a tax equivalent to 20 ounces of silver + 2 pennies! It must be assumed, therefore, that the household envisaged was of a very particular sort and that any similarities to known Orcadian pennyland terminology are spurious.

That is not to say, however, that the unit itself has never existed in Islay. In fact, the most likely candidate for this erstwhile 'pennyland extent' appears to be the enigmatic Islay cowland.

[203] The charter records the transfer of the single pennyland of Scar from the monastery of Devenish in County Fermanagh to Sir George MacKenzie along with certain other lands in Islay (OPS:61).

As we have already seen, the Islay cowland of the 17th and 18th century rentals was valued at ¼ M or 3s. 4d. As a result, there would have been 10 cowlands per quarterland of 33s. 4d. This means that two Islay quarterlands would contain 20 cowlands – the same number of pennylands we would expect to find in a West Highland *tirunga*. The Old Extent value of 20 Islay cowlands or two Islay quarterlands is £3 6s. 8d (5 M) – much closer to the £4 (6 M) of the standard ounceland than the £6 13s. 4d. (10 M) of Thomas' reconstructed four-quarterland unit or Lamont's 16 cowland *bailebiataigh*. Unlike Thomas' and Lamont's reconstructions, the existence of the 5 M 'two-quarterland' unit is clearly attested by the Crown charter of 1499 (see above).[204] Despite the rather confusing terminology, therefore, it seems that the two quarterland holding in Islay is in fact the same division described by the 'ounceland' terminology in other parts of *Scotia Scandinavica*. In terms of fractions, the Islay quarterland is a half of this unit, with the nominal Auchtenpart being the real 'quarter' of the parent denomination.

	4 Islay quarterlands **£6 13s. 4d**; 133 1/3 s; OR 10 M
'Ounceland' (ON **eyrisland*) Standard extent = **£4**; 80 s; OR 6M	**2 Islay quarterlands = '1 ounceland'?** Islay extent = **£3 6s. 8d**; 66 2/3 s; OR 5M
'Pennylands' **20** 'pennylands' per 'ounceland' in the West Highlands and Islands	**'Cowlands'** **20** 'cowlands' per 2 quarterlands in Islay

Figure 48: Comparison of the standard Hebridean 'ounceland' and the '2 quarterland' unit in Islay

There are further reasons to suspect that the '5 M' extent may reflect the fundamental settlement unit in medieval Islay. It is possible to recreate the boundaries of these 2 'quarter' 'ounceland' units using geometric patterns on MacDougal's map of 1749-51 (*cf.* Chapter 4), known combinations of farm-districts in the local rentals and charters (Appendix I), topographical boundaries (OS 1:25,000 sheets) and of course an extent of 2 Q. For the purposes of this exercise, the parish boundaries were those of MacDougall's mid 18th century survey and the extents those of the 1722 rental – the earliest document showing a fully comprehensive division of the island by extent as opposed to rent.

In the tables below, Q = Quarterland, A = Auctenpart, L = Leorthas and C = Cowland. Groupings of farm-districts are indicated *, **, X and Y, with apportionment of extent being made by comparison with earlier sources (see Appendix I). There are two important provisos to this data. Both MacDougall's map and the 1722 rental list several farm-districts not included in the other. In addition to this, while the extents of the reconstructed ounceland units vary from one to more than four quarters at the extremes, it

[204] Other examples of 5 M holdings are known from the rentals: *eg.* De Arnadow and five other holdings in Maclan's Extent of 1507; and charters: *eg.* the 5M of Nerabollsadh in the charter of 1588.

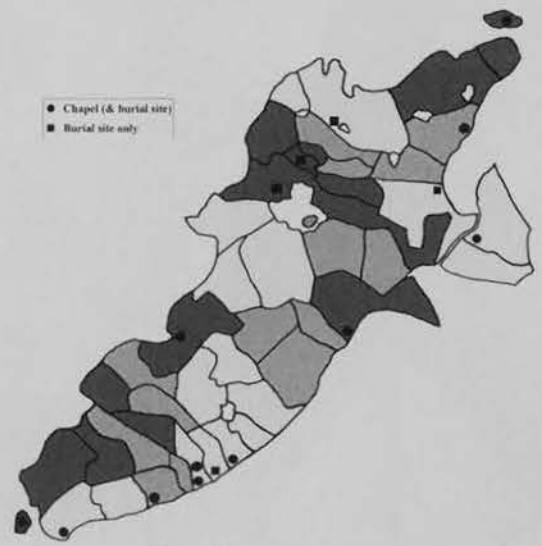
must be noted that the recorded extents of Islay's farm-districts were not completely static. While some have increased since the earliest records, others appear to have shrunk. Based on the farm-districts listed in both the 1507 and 1722 rentals, for example, both Kilarrow and Kilmeny show a net growth of *c.* 2 Q, Kilchoman of 1.75 Q but Kildalton a net reduction of *c.* 2 Q, with most of this being in the eastern part of the parish.

Figure 49: Reconstructed ouncelands in Islay

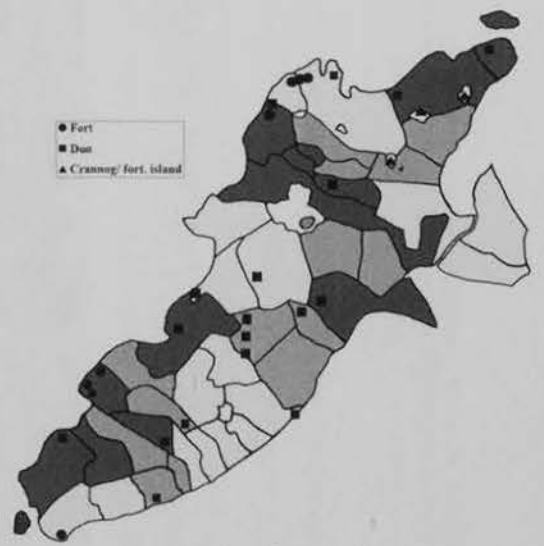
Kilchoman: 42.7Q			
Orsay	?	**Conisby**	Q
Cladville	X	(Lorgba A)	A
Ballimony	Q		**1.5Q**
	2Q	Kilchoman (W) (+	3Q
Ellister (W) (+Bg,	Q	Kilchoman (E)	-
Ellister (E)	Q	**Coul** (4Q)	X
	2Q		**4Q**
Arihalloch	3L	**Sunderland**	X
Octofad	A	Foreland	X
Almond	A		**2Q**
	1.75Q	**Ballinaby**	2Q?
Lossit	Q	**Smaul** (2Q +Kind.)	Q?
Kelsay	Q	**Leek** (3Q, A)	Y
	2Q	(Masherrveolin 1L?)	**3Q**
Tormisdale	Q	**Ardnave**	Q,2C
Cultoon	Q	Breakachey	Q
	2Q		**2.2Q**
Kilchiaran	3A	**Kilnave**	Q
Brade	3L	Leckgruinart	3L
	2.25Q	Grulin	?
Nerabolls	Q	Kindrochid	Q?
Craigfad	A		**2.75Q**
Torony	A	**Sanagmore**	3A
Olistadh	A	**Sanagbeg**	Y
Glassans	Q	(Gaylin 1C)	-
Gearach	Q	(Migarne Q)	**2Q**
	4.5Q	Coulabus	A
Grimsay	**	**Gruinart?**	Y
Octomore (3Q, L, C)	A	Lyrabus	L
Coultorsay	**	Corsapool	Y
Gartacharra	A		**2.75Q**
	2Q		

1: Farm-districts on MacDougall's map

2: Reconstructed ouncelands



3: Ecclesiastical monuments



4: Iron Age fortifications

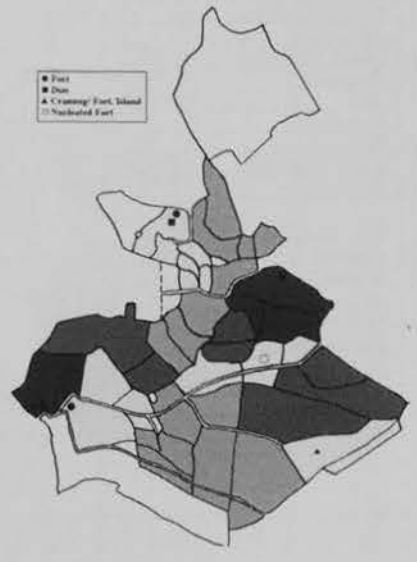
Figure 50: Reconstructed ouncelands in Kilchoman

Kilarrow: 22Q	
Kilinallan	1Q
	1Q
Carrabus	3L
Kinnabus (+E)	Q
Ealabus	-
Lagbuie	?
Killarow	A
Sorn (with	Q?
	3.25Q
Skerrols	Q
Octavullin	A
Tigh nan Cnoc	L
Eorrabus	A
Scarrabus	Q
	3.25Q
Gartachoassan	5L
Gartloist	3L
Grobolls	3L
	2.75Q
(Knockans A)	
(Drumalla Q)	
Daill (+CB, O,	2Q?
Cill Bhreanan	-
Dluich	3L
	2.75Q
Balitarsin	Q
Nereby	Q
	2Q
Nosebridge	Q
Mullindry	5L
Rosequern	A
Allallaidh	?
	2.75Q
Ardlarach	Q,2C
Tallant	3L
	1.95Q
Avonvogie	?
Avinlussa	A
Kilennan	A
Kilennan	A
	1.5Q
Barr	Q
Cattadale	A
Kynagarry	Q
	2.5Q
Island	A
Curiloch	L
Corr Airidh	A
	1.25Q
Laggan(+Torra)	7L
	1.75Q

1: Farm-districts on MacDougall's map

2: Reconstructed ouncelands

2: Ecclesiastical monuments

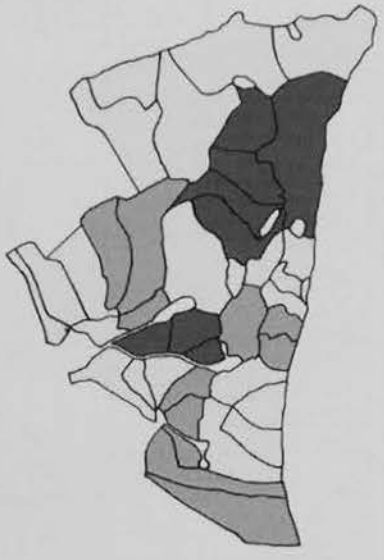


4: Iron Age fortifications

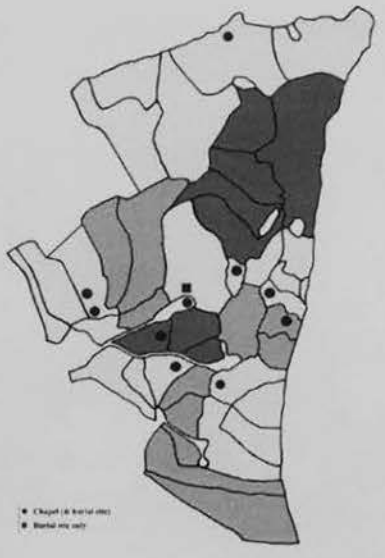
Figure 51: Reconstructed ouncèlands in Kilarrow

Kilmeny: 27.4Q	
Balole (+L)	3A
Leek	-
Duisker	A
Ballimartin	3A
	3.5O
Esknish	O
Tiervaagin	*
Kilmeny	*
	3O
Keppolsmore	3A
Robolls (+ BC)	O
Ballygrant	A
	3O
Baile Tharbhach	O
Ballachlaven	O
Sean Ghairt	O
	3O
Staoisha (Nather)	A
Staoisha (Upper)	A
Margadale	2C
Ardnahoe	A
Balulive	O
	2.7O
Torrabus	A
Persabus	A
Keills	3L
Port Askaig	2C
	1.95O
Portaneilean (+others+C)	Q,L
Mulreesh	A
Ballighillan	O
(0.5C)	**2.75O**
Knockclearoch	O
Ardachie	O
Airidh Ghuaidre	A
Storakaig	A
	3O
Ballyclach	*
Balleachdrach	*
Lossit (6Q; extras)	*
Eacharnach	*
	3O
Cill Sleabhan	*
Carnbeg	A
Scanistle	?
	1.5O
Gortantaoid (=Balenish)	O
Doodilbeg	?
Doodilmore	A
Bolsa (+AnH, Uab.)	L
'Uaberneik'?	L
	2O

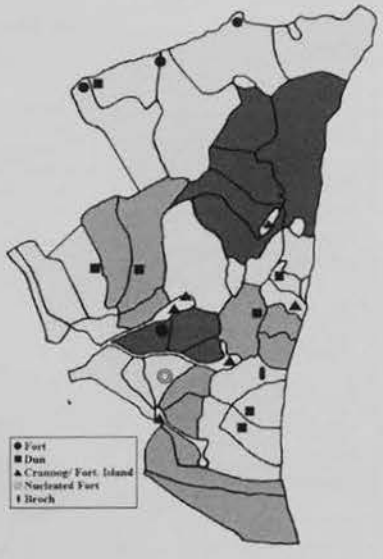
1: Farm-districts on MacDougall's map



2: Reconstructed ouncelands



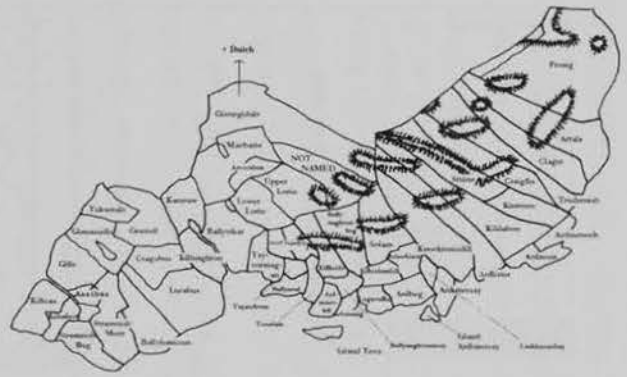
3: Ecclesiastical monuments



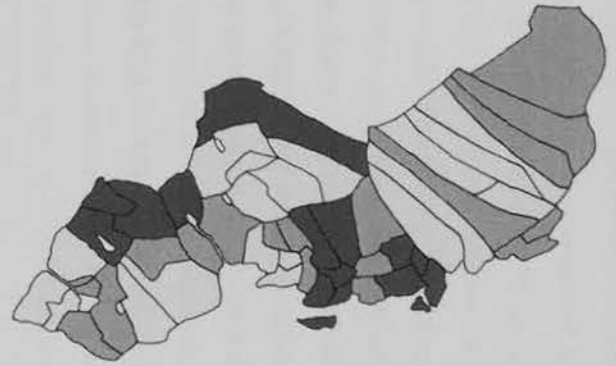
4: Iron Age fortifications

Figure 52: Reconstructed ouncelands in Kilmeny

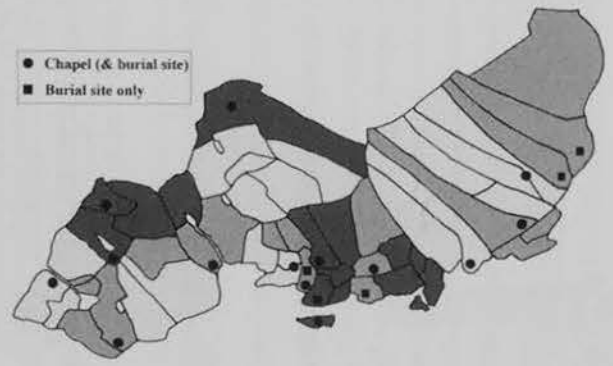
Kildalton 33.4Q			
Proaig	1A	Ballivicar	3L
Ardtalla	1Q	Kilnaughton	A
Claggain	1A	Cragabus	Q
	2Q		**2.25Q**
Trudernish	1A	**Leorin**	2A
Creagfinn	1A	Arivochaluim	?
Kintour	3L	Machrie	Q
Stuine	L		**2Q**
	2Q	Kintra	5L
Ardmeinach	1A	**Glenastle**	7C
Ardmore	1A	**Tokmal**	L
Kildalton	1A	**Grasdale**	-
	1.5Q		**2.2Q**
Ardilistry (+CR)	Q,A	Lurabus	Q
Cnoc Rhaonastil	-	Ballychatrigan	Q
	1.5Q		**2Q**
Ardimersay	Q	**Stremnishmore**	Q
Leekkanokaky	?	**Strimnishbeg**	A
Airigh nam Beast	-	Asabus	?
Ardbeg (Dun?)	5L		**1.5Q**
	2.25Q	Kinnabus	?
Lagavulin (Dun?)	-	Killeyan	5L
Surnaig (+various)	5C	**Giol**	3L
Callumkill	3L		**2Q**
Solam	4C	**Glenegedale**	Q
+3C?	**1.65Q**	Duich	Q
Ballynaughton beg	A		**2Q**
Ballynaughtonmore	A		
Kilbride	A		
Ardenistle (+3C?)	3C		
Texa	L		
	2.05Q		
Torradale	Q		
	1Q		
Ballyneal	Q		
Tighandrom	A		
Tighcarmagan	Q		
	2.5Q		



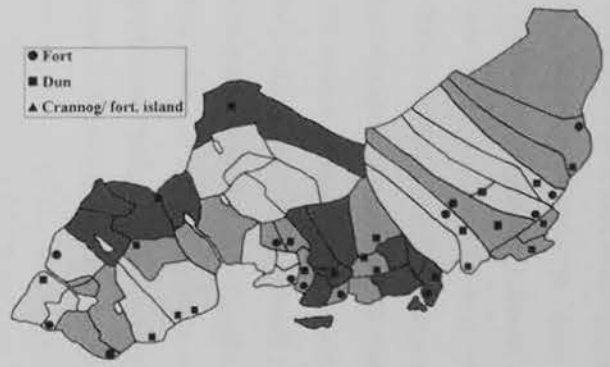
1: Farm-districts on MacDougall's map



2: Reconstructed ouncelands



3: Ecclesiastical monuments



4: Iron Age fortifications

Figure 53: Reconstructed ouncelands in Kildalton

Almost all of the reconstructed ouncelands contain a portion of good arable land in addition to sizeable tracts of upland grazing; more than half of them (28 from 55) have at least one later-medieval chapel; and a significant percentage of them (44%) contain one or more Iron Age fortification: roughly the same proportion as individual farm-districts.

Perhaps of even greater significance, however, is that most of the reconstructed ounceland units (41 from 55 or 75%) contain at least one farm-district with a high-status ON settlement name – *eg.* with a topographic generic or containing the elements *býr*, *staðir*, or *þing* (see Chapter 7). In fact, several of these – *Ellister, *Sannog and *Stremnish – consist only of contrasted pairs of ON topographic settlement names – suggesting correspondence between the earlier, non-contrasted forms and ounceland divisions. Of the remaining 14 units, at least 6 others contain at least one name with a (secondary) ON habitative generic such as *bólstaðr*. In total, therefore, just under 90% of the reconstructed 'ounceland' units contain farm-districts with names built around ON onomastic material.

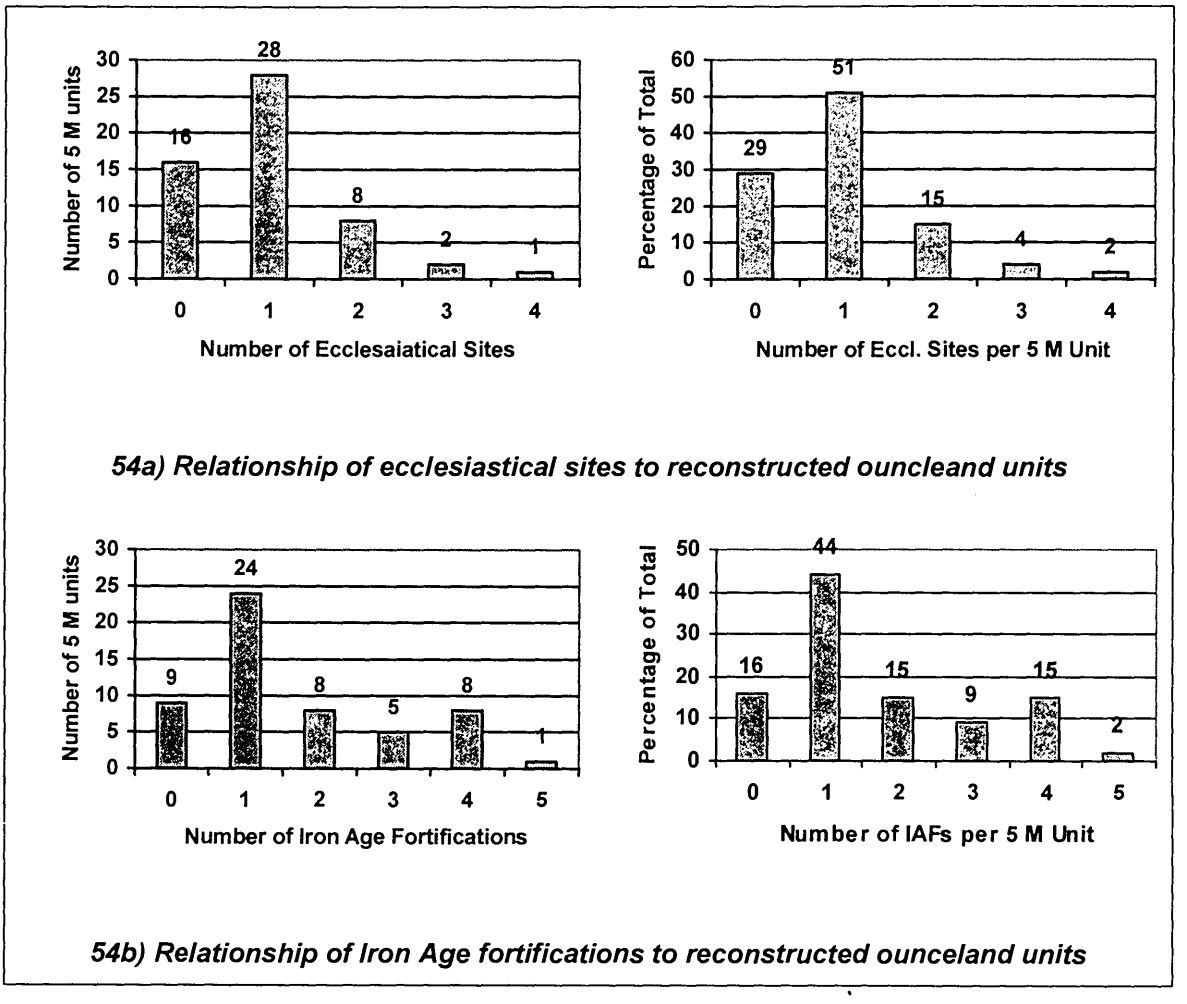


Figure 54: Relationship of ecclesiastical and Iron Age fortifications to reconstructed ouncelands

8.4.6 Reconstructed ouncelands and patterns in the nomenclature

Certain groupings of place-name generics appear to confirm the existence of the suggested 'ounceland' units. The most conspicuous of these are the Kilarrow, Kilmeny and Oa groups of ON *–bólstaðr* names discussed in Chapter 7. The clustering of these names within probable ounceland divisions lends weight to the argument that they were coined *en masse* – perhaps during a period of intense settlement or fiscal re-organisation. Their distribution around prestigious Norse settlement names such as Sorn, Skerrols, (Port) Askaig, Giol and Gruinart, for example, suggests that the areas were first of all acquired by important Norse *landnámsmen* and then quickly divided between their followers. In other areas, where the connection is with G names, it is possible that Norse incomers found it politically expedient to adopt the names of native prestige centres without necessarily adopting any of the other traits of native society.

The clustering of G *baile* names within the reconstructed ouncelands of Kilmeny also points to origins during an intense period of naming activity. Given the proximity of these particular farm-districts to the Lordship centre on Eilean Mor, it could be argued that this followed quickly on the arrival of Somerled in the mid 12th century. Once again, however, the presence of ON and ONX names either within or directly adjacent to these units precludes the absence of a Norse speaking element in the local population. Even the area around Lossit in Kilmeny parish, the heart of the old collection of Church lands known as the Tenandry of Lossit and the most onomastically G section of MacDougall's map, is not devoid of ON nature names.[205]

While Lamont (1957:104 FN4) observes that 'some of the numerous [Islay *baile-* names] may have derived from "Bailebiataigh" rather than from the "baile" as a township', the most likely use of this generic in Islay also appears to have been of sub-divisions. The farm-districts of Ballitarsin and Neriby, for example, combine to form a classic example of the 'ounceland' unit described above. They form a geometrically compact unit on MacDougall's map, are more easily accessible to each other than any other holdings, share the ruins of a medieval chapel and have an extent of 2 Q. While it is possible that Ballytarson is the original '*býr*' implied by the name Neraby – *ie.* the prestige parent settlement from which Neraby was later divided off – the fact that the divisional name is Norse would nevertheless suggest that the communities in this and surrounding areas were thoroughly Norse by this point. Perhaps equally likely therefore, is that Ballytarson and other G names in similar positions have replaced pre-existing Norse names.

8.4.7 Continuity or disjuncture?

As with the urislands and davachs of the surrounding areas, it seems likely that these reconstructed Islay ouncelands would have had origins in a pre-Norse system of land-division. Given the fundamental economic role of this unit and the likelihood that it was yet further defined by local topography and man-made boundaries, there is no reason why its adoption by the incoming Norse need point to anything but

[205] The most conspicuous examples of this category on modern OS maps are Dùn Bhoreraic, and Eas Forsa (see Appendix I).

the most superficial of contact. To discern how, if at all, it related to the tech of the *Senchus*, and whether these survived into the post-Norse period will require closer examination of the island's larger administrative units.

8.5 The Larger divisions

A second framework for the study of settlement development in Islay is provided by the boundaries of its parochial system. As there is no direct evidence for the origins of the parish network in Islay, its introduction and early growth must be gauged on the basis of more general trends.

The introduction of the parish system throughout 'North Britain' and Ireland in the 12th and 13th centuries represents a clear and final break with the old monastic system of church organisation. Although officially intended to counter alleged inadequacies in the provision of pastoral care, the needs of the Church to maximise its income and maintain authority in the face of increasingly powerful feudal lordships must have played equally heavily in the switch to a territorial system of administration.

In Ireland, synods were held to establish the boundaries of the four provinces and their dioceses at Rathbreasail in 1111 and Kells/ Mellifont in 1156. While these synods made no provision for the subdivision of the various dioceses into parishes, it is clear from the Papal Taxation list of 1306 that the process was complete by the early 14th century (McErlean 1983:332-3).

On the Scottish mainland, the driving force behind the introduction of the parish system appears to have been the Saxon princess Margaret, daughter of Edward Aetheling, who in 1068/9 became the second wife of Malcolm 'Canmore' (G 'Big head/chief'), king of Scots. Although Margaret was a known patron of the reformed religious orders, her greatest ecclesiastical legacy can be seen indirectly through the actions of her sons. By the reign of her 6th son, David I (1124-53), the process of feudalisation and the introduction of the parish system which accompanied it were both well underway (Cowan 1960:43-55; Cowan & Easson 1957:4-5).

The process of parish formation in Man can be traced to about the same period. Although the mid 16th century Manx *Traditionary Ballad* attributes the origin of the parishes to Saint Maughold, who was said to have grouped together several treens to form a single parish (Megaw 1963:187-92), this must be considered dubious. The present configuration of Manx parishes is generally thought to have been laid out shortly before or during the time of Óláfr I *bitling* (ON 'the diminuitive') (*c.* 1103-1154). Like his close contemporary, Margaret Aetheling, Olaf had spent his younger days at the English court, where he too appears to have been impressed by the reforming Roman church. It was Olaf who confirmed the new Romanised diocese of Sodor (also known as the Sudreys and Sodornes), *c.* 1135 – with the Isle of Man forming its spiritual centre (Megaw 1963:187-92; Woolf 2003:171-82). While an earlier Manx diocese is implied in CRM when it states that in 1079 'Roolwer died as bishop and was buried on Man in the same

year', not one of the recorded Manx parish churches is mentioned in any document written before the 12th century (*cf.* Reilly 1988:21).

As King of Man and the Isles, it is not impossible that Olaf was also responsible for parish formation in Islay. If he was not, this can almost certainly be traced to the period following the MacSorley establishment of the diocese of Argyll *c.* 1183 (MacDonald 1997:211-12). With both of these windows being likely to post-date the island's Norse period, it might be assumed that the study of parish divisions was only relevant to known and suspected developments in the island's post-Norse nomenclature. It seems unlikely, however, that the parish network would have developed completely independently of its secular context. In England, where charter evidence is abundant, it seems that many parishes followed the layout of earlier estates (Morris 1983). In Ireland, where the evidence is less abundant, a close association has nevertheless been identified between the secular *bailebiataigh* and the parish in counties Monaghan, Derry, Donegal, Fermanagh, Tyrone and Cavan (McErlean 1983:332-3). And even where this is not the case, it has still been possible to demonstrate a connection between parishes and the preceding systems of territorial organisation. Ní Ghabhláin's (1996:57-8) study of the medieval parishes in the diocese of Kilfenora, for example, has shown that parishes were formed variously from existing tribal territories or groupings of church holdings.

8.5.1 Islay Parishes

The 'classic' configuration of Islay's parish system, comprising the kirks of Kilchoman, Kilarrow and Kilmeny and Kildalton (and Oa), dates back to the second half of the 18th century. Prior to this, and following the Reformation, the number appears to have fluctuated. Between 1618 and 1769, for example, Kilchoman was annexed to Kilarrow (Ramsay 1991:76) reducing the effective number of parishes to two. But even so, the general shortage of ministers then affecting remote and Gaelic speaking parts of Scotland meant that there was often only one minister to serve the entire island (Ramsay 1991:76). The situation stabilised in 1747 with the financial intervention of the island's second Shawfield Campbell laird, Daniel 'the younger' (Ramsay 1991:76 & 77-9). Unsurprisingly, his offer to erect three parishes and supply the ministers with stipends, communion money, manses and glebes was unanimously accepted in Acts of the Synod of Argyle in 1762 and 1763, and again in 1763 by the Presbytery of Kintyre (Ramsay 1991:76 & 77-91).

The correspondence of these three later parishes with the secular feudal divisions known as 'wards' in the local rentals of the 17th and 18th centuries has led most commentators to assume that there were also three parishes prior to the Reformation (Innes 1854:260-75; Cowan 1960:94, 97 & 99; RCAHMS 1984 *etc.* but *cf.* Lamont 1966:76). Indeed, when taken at face value, this tri-partite division seems reasonably consistent with the island's better known ecclesiastical centres. Kilchoman, for example, is recorded as an independent parsonage within the gift of the Lords of the Isles from the second half of the 14th century (RCAHMS 1984:196) until their confiscation in 1493 (Cowan 1967:97; OPS:273). The discovery of two early Christian cross slabs c. 330m to the SW and c. 380m to the ESE of the church building (RCAHMS

1984:196-7) suggests, moreover, that the site had already become an important centre of Christian worship in the pre-Norse period.

The style of decoration on a number of sculptured stones from the vicinity of the old church building at Kilarrow suggest that the site had been in use since at least the fourteenth century – about the same time that the independent parsonage of St Maelrubha is first mentioned in the historical record (RCAHMS 1984:184). The parsonage remained under the patronage of the Lords of the Isles until their forfeiture in 1493 (Cowan 1967:94), when it appears to have passed first to the Scottish Crown (OPS:261) and then for a period in the 16th century to the rectory of Urney in the diocese of Derry (Gwynn & Hadcock 1970:195).

Year	Name of Divisions			
1541	Insula de Ilay	The Rynnis of Ilay	The Myd Ward of Ilay	
1549	Kildalltan	Kilchoman	Kilmorvin	Kilmheny
1627	Illyntassin	Rynnis	Midle-waird	
1630	-	Rendes	-	
1631	Kildalton	Rynis of Ila	ye harees of Ila	
1662	Ilantassin	Ilay et Rynnies	Midlevard de Ilay	
1686	Paroche of Kildaltane	Paroch of Kilchomane	Herreis	
1694	Paroach of Kildaltan	Kilchoman paraoch	Killarow paroach	
1722	Kildaltan Parroch	Killchomman Parish	Kilvarow & Kilmanie Parocheis	
1733	Parish of Kildaltan	Parish of Kilhomen	Parishes of Killarow and Kilmenie	
1741	Parish of Kildaltan	Parish of Kilhowman	Parishes of Killarow and Kilmenie	
1749-51	Parish of Kildalton	Parish of Kilchoman	Parish of Killarow or Bowmore	Parish of Kilmeny

Figure 55: Larger administrative divisions in Islay (taken from rentals, charters etc.)

The church at Kildalton was an independent parsonage in the gift of the Bishops of the Isles (Cowan 1967:99) until the Reformation, when it passed to the Scottish Crown. In 1548, Queen Mary is recorded as presenting Master Cornelius Omey, and in 1549 Sir Archibald M'Ilwray, to the rectory of the church of St John the Evangelist called Kildaltane (OPS:268). While the earliest reference dates to 1425 (BI:446), the surrounding burial ground contains what is understandably regarded to be the one of the finest early Christian crosses in Britain. Dated on typological grounds to around 800 AD, this cross also points to the high status ecclesiastical use of the site in the pre-Norse period (NMRS:NR45SE 3.03).

While the antiquity of these particular church-sites is beyond question, there are reasons to believe that they were not the only major ecclesiastical centres in Islay during the medieval period.[206] Although the church at Kilmeny, for example, was only officially consecrated as the centre of a *quoad sacra* parish by the Synod of Argyll in 1849 (RCAHMS 1984:216), there is evidence to suggest that the area served by it had previously been endowed with parish status. Stephen MacDougall's survey of 1749-51, for example, divides Islay into four parishes – Kilchoman, Kildalton, Killarow (or Bowmore) and Kilmeny. In 1549, the old chapel at Kilmeny was described by Dean Monro as one of the four parish churches of Islay (Monro 2002:310).

While there are no early records of an independent parish in the southern part of the Rhinns, the church of Kilchiaran is described alongside that of Kilchoman as one of two parish churches in the Rhinns in the period following the Reformation. Perhaps of equal significance here is the architectural evidence. Although the church itself is now ruinous and is known to have been roofless by 1794 (RCAHMS 1984:194-5), its dimensions are more comparable with those of the known parish centres than the island's many smaller proprietary chapels (Appendix III).

Similarly, while there are no specific references to a separate parish in the Oa before the Reformation, one early 17th century account mentions 'the two parishes in this part calld Largki, called Kildaltan and Kilnachtan' (RCAHMS 1984:373). When proposals for a new parish church at Lagavulin were made in 1651, it was agreed that 'the twa old paroaches of Kildaltan and Kilnachten be the paroache of the said new kirk' (BI:481). As with the church building at kilchiaran, the dimensions of the old church at Kilnaughton are far more substantial than those of the island's likely private chapels (Appendix III).

On the balance of probabilities, therefore, it seems likely that there were actually six parochial divisions at some point in Islay's past. This does not necessarily mean, however, that there were only ever six important ecclesiastical centres in Islay. It should be noted, for example, that a mandate was granted by Pope Clement VII on 18 Nov 1369 to provide Machabee Patricii to the parish church of St Fynan on Islay. (Burns 1976:169).

One potential explanation for confusion about the number of parishes lies in the terminology used in the early records. As we have already seen, the earliest references to ecclesiastical units in Kilchoman, Kilarrow and Kildalton are not in fact to parishes but to 'rectories'. The essential difference between a rectory and a parish lies not in the unit itself but in the rights of the incumbent. While a rector could, in theory, be a clergyman and take personal responsibility for his parishioners' pastoral needs, he was just as likely to have been a lay-man. But, as the rector was entitled to the entire portion of tithal income not claimed by the local bishopric, he might then set aside a portion of this money as payment for an

[206] The significance of this tri-partite division and whether it is the result of topographical accident or a more deliberate policy akin to that which resulted in the thirds of Orkney (below), the 'Ridings' (ON **þriðjungir*) of Yorkshire (Ekwall 1925) or the three part divisions of the Icelandic Quarter districts (Karlsson 2000:20-7) will be discussed in more depth below.

ecclesiastical substitute or vicar who would then perform the religious rites and duties in his stead. While rectories could in theory be coterminous with a parish, in practise, they tended to be quite a bit larger. Ní Ghabhláin's (1996:36-61) study of the origins of the parish structure in the Irish Diocese of Kilfenora suggests a link between rectories and long-established tribal territories. Ní Ghabhláin sees the rectory as an intermediate stage of parochial formation, whereby large secular territories were consecrated as parishes and received an incumbent, later known as the rector, before concerns about pastoral care saw them divided into smaller territories, albeit in a way which did not interfere with the benefices of the rector (*cf.* Nicholls 1971:53-84). Given that the rectories of Kilfenora covered at least two and as many as eight individual parishes, it seems reasonable to assume that the same might also have been true in Islay. As each of these smaller ecclesiastical units will have been equipped with at least one chapel, it makes sense to look for their boundaries in the distribution of old chapel sites.

8.5.2 '*Cill*- sites', '*Cill*- districts' and '*Cill*- units'

Islay is well known for its large number of medieval chapels and burial sites. These have received increasing attention in recent years (*cf.* RCAHMS 1984; Swift 1987; Waters forthcoming). As they are often denoted by names containing the G generic *cill* (see Chapter 7), they can conveniently be termed '*Cill*-sites'.

The spatial characteristics of Islay's *Cill*-sites were examined in detail by Swift in her 1987 MPhil thesis on the *Irish Influence on Ecclesiastical Settlements in Scotland.* While Swift concluded that there was no discernible correlation between these sites and the farm-district boundaries illustrated on MacDougall's map (1987:172-3), her analysis assumed each farm-district to be an economically and culturally self-contained unit. Surprisingly, she took no account of fiscal extent. As we have already seen, however, there is a fairly clear correlation between the 5 M or 66s 8d. extent and the distribution of medieval chapels and burial sites in Islay.

An even greater shortcoming in Swift's analysis was her failure to make a distinction between different types of ecclesiastical site. Although most of the sites she surveyed were denoted by a name containing the G generic *cill* in conjunction with a saint's name, there is no reason to assume that they all served the same primary function let alone represent a unified system of ecclesiastical administration. Some of the material remains are likely to represent proprietary churches, erected for the exclusive use of wealthy landowners or monastic orders. While some of these might predate the introduction of the parish system, others may have been introduced at a later date and functioned in parallel with parish churches (*cf.* Ní Ghabláin 1996:57-8). Even after the introduction of the parish system, it is probable that different chapels were built to serve different purposes. While some were clearly parish churches, others might well have served a more secondary purpose. Some might have been built for occasional use in outlying parts of the parish, others might have had a purely mortuary function and others still might have been built as annexes to altogether different kinds of (ecclesiastical) institution. It is worth considering, for example, that while the chapel on the Lordship centre of Eilean Mor would have been perfectly capable of hosting religious

ceremonies, it is perhaps more indicative of the MacDonald's need for an effective bureaucracy than their religious devotion.

That is not to say that there is no discernible pattern within this body of names. A fundamental distinction can be drawn in this respect between places with *cill-* names *per se* and places with a *cill-* name which are recorded as settlement-districts in the early charters and rentals. The members of this second group, which will be termed '*Cill*-districts' for ease of reference, must have been of far greater significance for their names to have been transferred from an original church or graveyard to an entire settlement district rather than an insignificant heap of grass-covered rubble. Although 15 non-contrasted examples of such names are shown on MacDougall's map, further examination of the early sources reveals a number of other significant *cill*-districts

In his description of the Isles from *c.* 1695, Martin Martin (2002:149) lists 'St Columbus, his church at Laggan', as one of five churches in Islay. This accords with the association in 16th and 17th century rentals of the now lost farm-district of *Keilchalumkeill* with the adjacent farm-districts of Laggan and Duich in the (Appendix I). Although this site was last used for burial as recently as 1824, erosion by the river Laggan has since obliterated all trace of the chapel itself.

The association of Kelsay in Kilchoman parish with the name Kilcavan in the 16th and 17th century rentals – *eg. Kelsa et Kintesane* (1507), *Kilcavane and Kelsay* (1541a) *etc.* – suggests that there may have been an important chapel site and/or burial ground in the vicinity. Although there is no mention of any such site in the RCAHMS Inventory, it has been suggested that this is exactly what is represented by the turf covered remains of a rectilinear drystone building measuring *c.* 6x10m just to the E of Kelsay farmsteading (David Caldwell pers. comm.).

The name Cill Eileagain, now associated only with a ruinous chapel and burial ground on the lands of Mulreesh in Kilmeny (RCAHMS 1984:165-6), appears in connection with Balulive in a few later documents. In the rental of 1686, for example, we see the farm-district of *Ballulif and Kollelagan.* A small slab of quartzite stone found at this site is incised with an interlace cross, which has been dated on the basis of typological similarities with others from Iona and Glenaldough to the 9th to 11th century (Lamont 1972:21-2). Otherwise, the use of the site for ritual purposes can only be traced as far as its potentially 14th cross-slab (*cf.* NMRS:NR46NW 4).

Finally, although not part of a *Cill*-district, the chapel dedicated to St Columba on Orsay deserves closer attention. In or about 1828, work was completed on the construction of a new Parliamentary kirk at Portnahaven at the southern tip of the Rhinns. While this church was only officially consecrated as the centre of a *quoad sacra* parish by the Synod of Argyle in 1849 (RCAHMS 1984:256), there is some evidence to suggest that the area it served had previously had important ecclesiastical status. Although the fishing village at Portnahaven is comparatively recent (RCAHMS 1984:301-2; see above), settlement

associated with the adjacent island of Orsay can be traced back as far as the earliest rentals. While the island itself is small and relatively infertile, it is nevertheless listed as a 16s. 8d. or Auchtenpart land – in other words, a reasonably substantial unit. As the largest part of this holding must therefore have been on the adjacent mainland, it seems likely that the relatively large chapel on Orsay catered for the population near the southern tip of the Rhinns in much the same way as the *quoad sacra* parish church of Portnahaven has done in more recent times. The similarity of this last example to the 18 documented *Cill-* districts raises the possibility that they might all share other defining features in addition to the place-name generic *cill*. Given the important position these farm-districts would have held in the island's economic landscape, it would be reasonable to assume that the associated chapels served an equally important role in its ecclesiastical landscape.

If these 19 farm-districts did represent the centres of early ecclesiastical units, which will be termed '*Cill-* units', we would expect them to be fairly evenly distributed in the landscape. This need not necessarily demand, however, that they are situated at regular intervals, which is clearly not the case, but rather that they command similarly sized zones of influence. There are 3 each in Kildalton, Oa and Kilchieran; with Kilarrow and Kilmeny having 4 apiece and Kilchoman 2. One way of establishing the areas these centres may have served is to analyse their distribution using Thiessen polygons.

Thiessen polygons – also known as Voroni networks, Delaunay triangulations and Dirichlet tessellation – can be used to describe the area of influence of a point in a set of points. Each point is first of all connected to its nearest neighbour to create a triangulated irregular network. When each connecting line is then bisected perpendicularly, the bisectors will create a series of closed polygons. The area contained within each polygon is closer to the point on which the polygon is based than to any other point in the dataset, thus marking a theoretical zone of influence.[207]

Variation in the sizes of the resulting polygons here suggests that the different *Cill-* units were of different sizes. Comparison with the divisions on MacDougall's map also suggests that they commanded different numbers of farm-districts. If, however, these zones are measured in terms of fiscal extent rather than the number of farm-districts or hectares they contain, the correlation is far more regular. It should be remembered that a standard Thiessen analysis like this takes no account of topographical features or cultural boundaries. But even without any significant adjustments there seems to be a general correspondence of *Cill-* units and roughly 6 Q OE – or to put it another way, three of the 5 M 'ounceland' holdings outlined above.

Some of the *Cill-* units in the parishes of Kilarrow and Kilmeny and around Loch Gorm, in Kilchoman are noticeably larger than 6 Q. While it would perhaps be unwise to seek complete uniformity in a reconstructed system, it must be remembered that the number and extents of settlement districts in these areas – which are by far the most fertile in Islay – are known to have grown in the 250 years of early

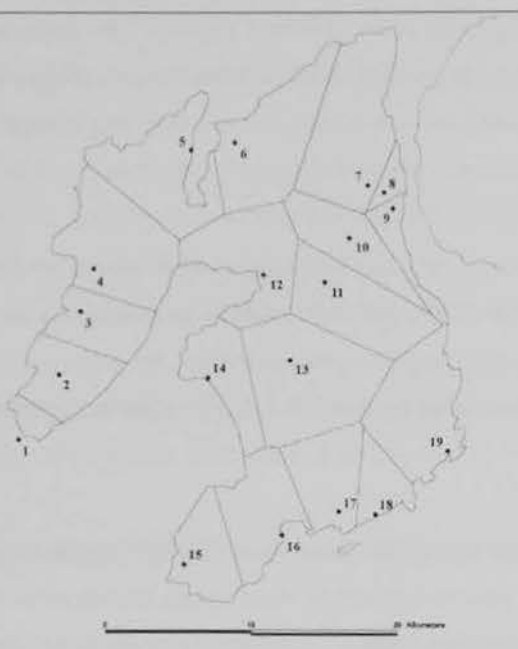
[207] For further information and applications see, for example: http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/alabaster/A901937 (27 May 2004).

records preceding MacDougall's survey and map. We might also expect Kilmeny parish, as the seat of the Lords of the Isles and presumably also their predecessors, to have been larger than the rest. Other, less fertile parts of the island, however, appear to have remained static or even decreased in extent during the same period (see above).

Having taken these points into consideration, the only parts of the island which deviate noticeably from the theoretical pattern are the S half of the Rhinns and NE Kilmeny. While there is no reason to assume that a model like this should be mirrored in its entirety by actual territorial divisions, the aberrations in question can be accounted for by three minor adjustments to the data-set. The first of these concerns the significance of Cill Eileagain.

The fact that Cill Eileagain appears only sporadically and late in the rentals and is never recorded as a district in its own right suggests that it might never have been considered as important as the others in the list. To reflect these difficulties it must therefore be regarded as a subordinate or proprietary unit within the nearby *Cill-* unit of Keills and removed from the equation.

The next two adjustments concern Kilcavan. As with Cill Eileagain, the fact that Kilcavan is never recorded as a district in its own right suggests that it too might never have functioned as the centre of a *Cill-* unit – a suspicion heightened by its somewhat marginal location. It will therefore also be removed from the equation. Following the general frequency of three *Cill-* units per (later medieval) parish, it would, however, be reasonable to seek a substitute somewhere else in the vicinity. The most obvious candidate is Nerabus. But while the settlement-district of Nerabus boasts the remains of two chapels and at least three burial grounds, the substitution of this holding for Kilkavan results in an even bigger aberration in the geometric and fiscal conformity of the other units to the general pattern. With these considerations in mind, it seems likely that the missing centre may have been in the close vicinity of Port Charlotte. Although the village of that name is modern and dates to the planned settlement of 1828 (see above), the choice of this site for such a development can be considered indicative of its previous importance. As there has always been a settlement here (Glassans/ Port Sgioba), it is possible that the theoretical chapel was a casualty of urban development.



1: Unamended analysis of the 19 initial 'Cill- units

2: Kilkavan replaced with Consiby, Cill Eileagain merged with Keills

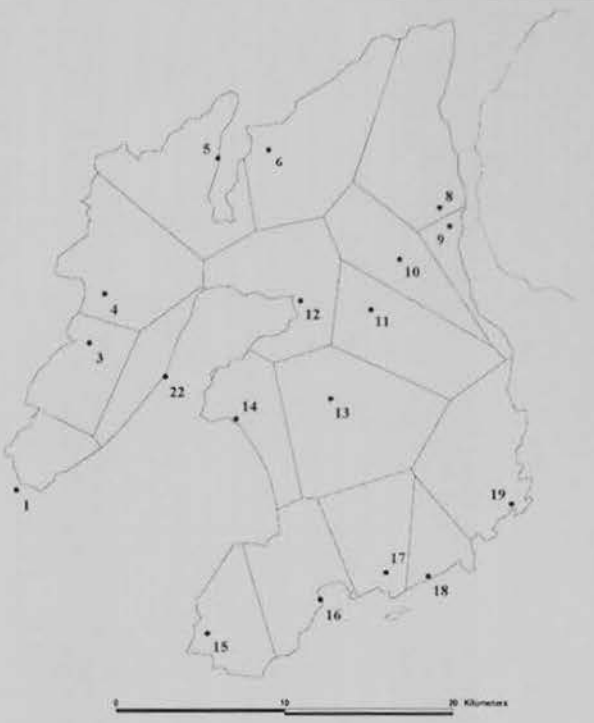
3: Kilkavan replaced with Nerabus, Cill Eileagain merged with Keills

4: Kilkavan replaced with Port Charlotte (Glassans/ Port Sgioba), Cill Eileagain merged with Keills

1.	Orsay/ Killcallumkil	9.	Kilslevan	17.	Kilbride
2.	Kilkavan	10.	Kilmeny	18.	Killallumkil
3.	Kilchiaran	11.	Kilbrennan	19.	Kildalton
4.	Kilchoman	12.	Killarow	20.	Conisby
5.	Kilnave	13.	Kilennan	21.	Nerabus
6.	Killinallan	14.	Laggan/ Killcallumkil	22.	Glassans/ Port Sgioba
7.	Cill Eileagain	15.	Killeyan		
8.	Keills/ Killcallumkil	16.	Kilnaughton		

5: Key to Cill-units

Figure 56: Thiessen analysis I



1: Thiessen polygon analysis

2: 'Cill- units' on MacDougall's Map

1.	Orsay/ Killcallumkil	9.	Kilslevan	15.	Killeyan
3.	Kilchiaran	10.	Kilmeny	16.	Kilnaughton
4.	Kilchoman	11.	Kilbrennan	17.	Kilbride
5.	Kilnave	12.	Killarow	18.	Killallumkil
6.	Killinallan	13.	Kilennan	19.	Kildalton
8.	Keills/ Killcallumkil	14.	Laggan/ Killcallumkil	22.	Glassans/ Port Sgioba

3: Key to Cill-units

Figure 57: Thiessen analysis II

Kildalton 33.4 Q

Kildalton: 16.45 Q

Proaig	1A	Ardilistry (+CR)	Q,A	Ballynaughton beg	A
Ardtalla	1Q	Cnoc Rhaonastil	-	Ballynaughtonmore	A
Claggain	1A		**1.5 Q**	Kilbride	A
	2 Q	Ardimersay (+anb)	Q	Ardenistle (+3C?)	3C
Trudernish	1A	Leekkanokaky	?	Texa	L
Creagfinn	1A	Airigh nam Beast	-		**2.05 Q**
Kintour	3L	Ardbeg (Dun?)	5L	Torradale	Q
Stuine	L		**2.25 Q**		**1 Q**
	2 Q	Lagavulin (Dun?)	-	Ballyneal	Q
Ardmeinach	1A	Surnaig (+various)	5C	Tighandrom	A
Ardmore	1A	Callumkill	3L	Tighcarmagan	Q
Kildalton	1A	Solam	4C	+3C?	**2.5 Q**
	1.5 Q	+3C?	**1.65 Q**		
KILDATON	**5.5 Q**	**CALLUMKILL**	**5.4 Q**	**KILBRIDE**	**5.55 Q**

Kilnaughton: 16.95Q

Ballivicar	3L	Lurabus	Q	Glenegedale	Q
Kilnaughton	A	Ballychatrigan	Q	Duich	Q
Cragabus	Q		**2 Q**		**2 Q**
	2.25 Q	Stremnishmore	Q	Island	A
Leorin	2A	Strimnishbeg	A	Curiloch	L
Arivochaluim	?	Asabus	?	Corr Airidh	A
Machrie	Q		**1.5 Q**		**1.25 Q**
	2 Q	Kinnabus	?	Laggan(+Torra)	7L
Kintra (+Grasdale)	5L	Killeyan	5L	***Callumkill**	?
Glenastle	7C	Giol	3L		**1.75 Q**
Tokmal	L		**2 Q**		
Grasdale	-				
	2.2 Q				
KILNAUGHTON	**6.45Q**	**KILLEYAN**	**5.5 Q**	***CALLUMKILL**	**5 Q**

Kilarrow and Kilmeny: 49.4 Q

Killarow: 22 Q

Carrabus	3L	Daill (+CB, O, S)	2Q?	Avonvogie	?
Kinnabus (+E)	Q	Cill Bhreanan	-	Avinlussa	A
Ealabus	-	Dluich (+Gerten.)	3L	Kilennan (Lower)	A
Lagbuie	?		**2.75 Q**	Kilennan (Upper)	A
Killarow	A	Balitarsin	Q		**1.5 Q**
Sorn (with Daill)	Q?	Nereby	Q	Barr	Q
	3.25 Q		**2 Q**	Cattadale	A
Skerrols	Q	Nosebridge	Q	Kynagarry	Q
Octavullin	A	Mullindry (+Leatur)	5L		**2.5 Q**
Tigh nan Cnoc	L	Rosequern	A		
Eorrabus	A	Allallaidh	?		
Scarrabus	Q		**2.75 Q**		
	3.25 Q				
Gartachoassan	5L				
Gartloist	3L				
Grobolls	3L				
	2.75Q				
(Knockans A, Drumalla Q)					
Ardlarach (+Crowarich)	Q,2C				
Tallant	3L				
	1.95 Q				
KILARROW	**12.2 Q**	**KILBRANAN**	**7.5 Q**	**KILENNAN**	**4 Q**

Kilmeny: 27.4 Q

Balole (+L)	3A	Staoisha (Nather)	A	Knockclearoch	Q
Leek	-	Staoisha (Upper)	A	Ardachie	Q
Duisker	A	Margadale	2C	Airidh Ghuaidre	A
Ballimartin	3A	Ardnahoe	A	Storakaig	A
	3.5 Q	Balulive	Q		**3 Q**
Esknish	Q		**2.7Q**	Ballyclach	*
Tiervaagin	*	Torrabus	A	Balleachdrach	*
Kilmeny	*	Persabus	A	Lossit (6Q; extras)	*
	3 Q	Keills (Killcolumkill)	3L	Eacharnach	*
Keppolsmore	3A	Port Askaig	2C		**3 Q**
Robolls (+ BC)	Q		**1.95 Q**	Cill Sleabhan	*
Ballygrant	A	Portaneilean (+others, + 5C)	Q,L	Carnbeg	A
	3 Q	Mulreesh	A	Scanistle	**?**
Baile Tharbhach	Q	Ballighillan	Q		**1.5 Q**
Ballachlaven	Q	(0.5C)	**2.75 Q**		
Sean Ghairt	Q				
	3 Q				
KILMENY	**12.5 Q**	**KILCOLUMKILL**	**7.4Q**	**KILSLEVAN**	**7.5 Q**

Figure 58: Quarterlands per parish and per Cill- unit as seen from 1722 Rental & MacDougall's map: I

Kilchoman: 42.7 Q											
Killerin: 21Q						**Kilchoman: 21.7Q**					
Orsay	?	Lossit	Q	Nerabolls	Q	Kilchoman (W) (+ oths)	3Q	Ardnave	Q,2C	Coulabus	A
Cladville	X	Kelsay	Q	Craigfad	A	Kilchoman (E)	-	Breakachey	Q	Gruinart?	Y
Ballimony	Q		**2 Q**	Torony	A	Coul (4Q) (+Masherv.)	X		**2.2 Q**	Lyrabus	L
	2 Q	Tormisdale	Q	Olistadh	A		**4 Q**	Kilnave	Q		**1.75 Q**
Ellister (W) (+Bg, An)	Q	Cultoon	Q	Glassans	Q	Sunderland	X	Leckgruinart	3L	Corsapool	Y
Ellister (E)	Q		**2 Q**	Gearach	Q	Foreland	X	Grulin	?	Killinallan	Q
	2 Q	Kilchiaran	3A		**4.5 Q**		**2 Q**	Kindrochid	Q?		**2 Q**
Arihalloch	3L	Brade	3L	Grimsay	**	Ballinaby	2Q?		**2.75 Q**	Gortantaoid (=Balenish)	Q
Octofad	A		**2.25 Q**	Octomore (3Q, L, C) (+LB)	A	Smaul (2Q +Kind.)	Q?	Sanagmore	3A	Doodilbeg	?
Almond	A			Coultorsay	**	Leek (3Q, A)	Y	Sanagbeg	Y	Doodilmore	A
	1.75 Q			Gartacharra	A		**3 Q**		**2 Q**	Bolsa (+AnH, Uab.)	L
					2 Q					'Uaberneik'?	L
				Conisby	Q						**2 Q**
				(Lorgba A)	A			(Gaylin 1C)			
					1.5 Q	(Masherrveolin 1L?)		(Migarne Q)			
ORSAY	**5.75 Q**	**KILLERIN**	**6.25 Q**	**GLASSANS**	**9 Q**	**KILCHOMAN**	**9 Q**	**KILNAVE**	**6.95 Q**	**KILLENALIEN**	**5.75 Q**

Figure 59: Quarterlands per parish and per Cill-unit as seen from 1722 Rental & MacDougall's map II

NB: As with the previous reconstruction of 'ouncelands', these groupings are speculative and subject to revision. The same provisos as to inclusivity and extents also apply.

The idea of the 6 Q, 200s. or £10 *Cill-* unit finds corroboration in several other sources. Perhaps the most significant of these is the Gaelic language charter of 1408 – the earliest detailed source of evidence for Islay place-names. As the farm-districts named in this document all belong to a single nobleman – Brian 'Vicar' McKay – they can reasonably be interpreted as a territorial unit. Identification of these districts on MacDougall's map shows that with the exception of Ballynaughton they were contiguous, amount to just over 200s. or £10 OE and correspond to the theoretical *Cill unit* of Kilnaughton as suggested by the Thiessen analysis.

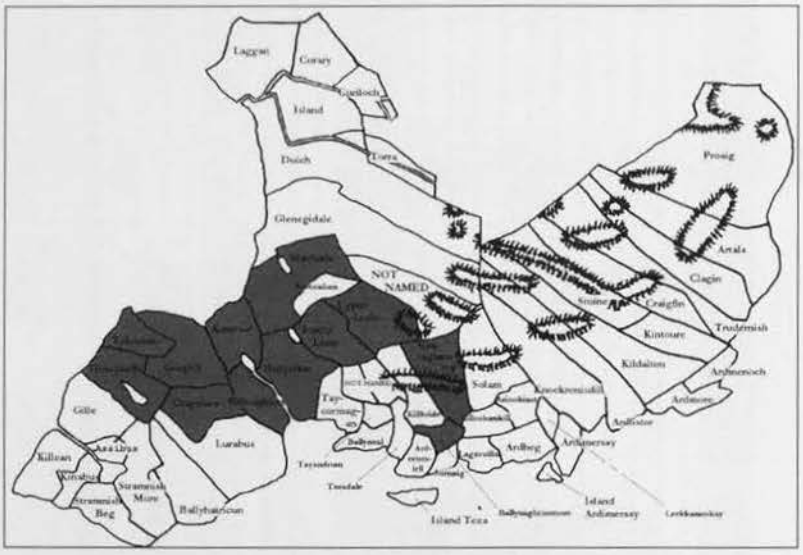


Figure 60: Brian 'Vicar' McKay's holdings in 1408

In 1722, Lossit in Kilmeny was listed as part of a £10 holding along with Kilsleaveens, Balluchtruk, Balleclach, Kilmenie and Turmagan, and the now lost Gertontibbert and Gortenles. While this list includes Kilmeny and Tiervaagain, which the present reconstruction would place in a neighbouring *Cill-* unit, it should be noted that the 1617 Tenandry of Lossit also includes, among other things, the farm-districts of Àiridh Ghutharaidh, Carnbeg and Eacharnach, which could potentially have taken the place of Kilmeny and Tiervaagain in previous incarnations of this land-holding.

With an extent of £20, it is possible that the unidentified land-holdings of Laintymanniche and Mwicheleische listed in the 1561 rental of the Bishopric of the Isles represent a further two *Cill-*units (Chapter 6). As with the ounceland units discussed above, it is also possible that more and less definite *Cill-* units alike are illustrated by the clustering of ON *-bólstaðir* names in W Kildalton and W Kilarrow; and the clustering of G *baile-* names in Kilmeny.

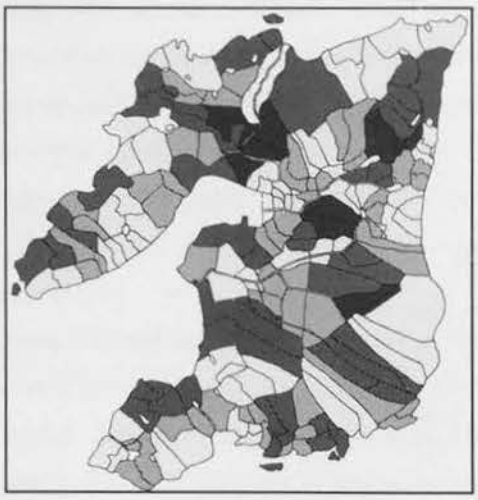
8.5.3 Boundary Names

It has been suggested that the lexical content of various Islay place-names can also help to identify ancient territorial boundaries in the landscape. Olson (1983:134), for example, has argued that the streams named *Allt na Criche*, (G 'the Stream of the Boundary') which run from the SW and E extremities of Loch Gorm in the Rhinns mark the boundaries between the districts known as Loch Rois and Cladrois in the *Senchus*. While it is entirely possible that these boundaries are ancient, the proliferation of names in G *crìoch* (f) on modern OS maps (Figure 61 below) suggests that the nomenclature is relatively recent and more likely to stem from the latter day division of the island into farm-districts. A more reliable indication of antiquity in the names of boundary features is provided by ON (*ex nomine*) onomastic units

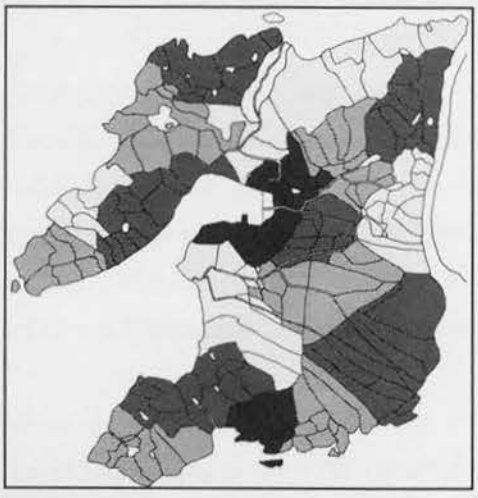
eg. those containing *mörk* (f), 'march, boundary', and less common G material such as *deal* (f), 'division'.[208] Although these names correspond once again to boundaries between farm-districts, their more liminal positions suggests that they may have been coined to refer to boundaries between the suggested ounceland or possibly even *Cill-* units – *eg.* Lochì nan Deala, which lies near the boundary of Keills and Carnbeg and thus the suggested *Cill-* units of Kilcolumkill and Kilslevan; Loch Indaal, 'the Loch of the Division', which borders on 8 of the 18 suggested *Cill-* units; Abhainn Ath a'Mharachaichd, 'the river of the field, or ford of *Mharacaichd (ON **Marká* 'Boundary river')', which marks the boundary between Kilarrow and Kilmeny parishes; and the valley of Margadale, 'boundry valley', which marks the boundary between the suggested *Cill-* units of Kilmeny and Killinallan.

This last boundary is of particular interest. While Killinallan is normally listed as a detached part of Kilarrow parish in the rentals, the other districts within its zone of influence appear to be spread between Kilmeny and Kilchoman. Given the range of high hills which separates Killinallan from both Kilmeny and Kilarrow and the location of a 'boundary' type name on the border of the suggested *Cill-* units of Killinallan and Killcolumkill, it is possible that Killinallan, as a *Cill-* unit, was associated with Kilchoman. This realignment would mean that each of the six medieval parishes would have had three *Cill-* units.

[208] A search for 'rann, ran *etc.*' on ICD did not appear to return any examples of G *rann* (f), 'division' (*cf.* Watson 1926:495-6).



Reconstructed ouncelands showing constituent farm-districts



'Cill- units' showing constituent farm-districts

Place-names indicating boundaries (all data from ICD)

Figure 61: Boundary names, farm-districts, ouncelands and Cill- units

8.5.4 The relationship between the 18 *Cill*-units and the 6 medieval parishes

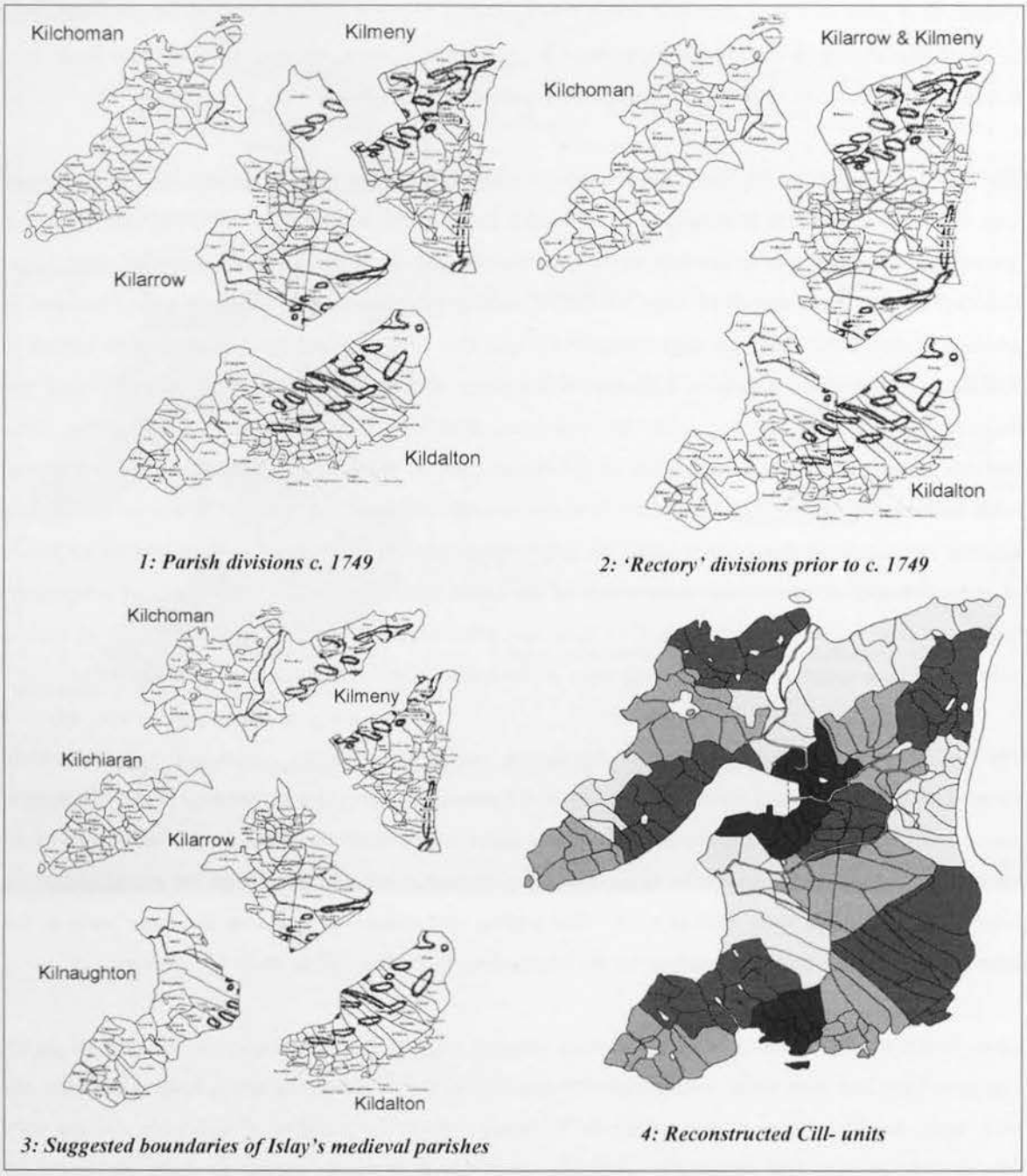
Although it would seem disproportionate if Islay, at around 60 ouncelands in extent, had a similar number of parishes to Man (17) at 216 treens or Orkney (24) at *c.* 200 urislands, this possibility should not be dismissed out of hand. But if all 18 of the proposed *Cill*-units were independent parishes, it seems rather strange that only six of them should be afforded any kind of higher ecclesiastical status in the documentary sources. The difference in status between the suspected medieval parish centres and the other *Cill*- units can also be seen in the dimensions of their respective chapels. It must be appreciated that the data-set here, as presented in Appendix III below, is inherently unreliable. We have no way of knowing if it is complete, if the different sets of material remains are contemporary or if any of the chapels have been rebuilt or extended. But it is nevertheless interesting to note that where the dimensions of the medieval chapels are known, those from the parish centres tend to be larger than those from other *Cill*-units, which in turn tend to be larger than those from other farm-districts.

The hierarchy suggested by these observations is mirrored elsewhere in the *Gàedhealtachd.* Although each of the rectories in the Irish diocese of Kilfenora, for example, had several parish churches, there was invariably one which was noticeably larger than the rest. Ní Ghabláin (1996:49) explains these larger churches as the 'chief church of large territories, receiving rectorial tithes from dependent parishes in addition to their own'. Thus we might imagine a scenario in Islay whereby the more important centres of Kilchiaran, Kilchoman, Kilarrow, Kilmeny, Kilnaughton and Kildaton, were better able to erect and maintain large church buildings than the remaining ecclesiastical units. There are, of course, some obvious exceptions to this pattern, such as the chapel ruins of Nave Island, Texa, Nerabus and several other holdings. But these need not detract from the general validity of the model. There is no reason why wealthy individuals or monasteries could not have erected substantial churches of their own either before or independently of the official introduction of the parish system or indeed why generous benefactors might not have aided the enlargement of their favourite 'official' churches. The existence of such a hierarchy does not, however, explain why more of the *Cill*-units did not develop into parish centres.

The regularity of these units in terms of distribution, spheres of influence, extent and even the generic element used in their names is strongly indicative of a planned system. One explanation is that this system was introduced in a flurry of optimism by a secular authority intent on making a mark before being pared back to a working minimum by its more realistic successors. It could be argued for example that 18 original parish centres were introduced by Olaf Bitling at the same time and on the same basis as the Manx system, before being rationalised by the MacSorleys in the late 12th or early 13th century.

Close parallels with the Manx and Irish systems certainly suggest that the instigator of the original parish system in Islay had done some research into the practices of the neighbouring areas. Special attention can once again be drawn here to the system in Kilfenora. While the parishes of Kilfenora diocese vary considerably in size (Ní Ghabhláin 1996:53), 5 of its 6 rectories appear to have an extent of approximately 36 Irish quarters – the equivalent of 9 *bailtebiataigh.* Although the 6th rectory is

substantially larger than the rest at almost 70 quarters, it also contains 'the dispersed church lands of the bishopric of Kilfenora' (Ní Ghabhláin 1996:53), which therefore distorts its core size. This relationship of 9 Irish *bailtebiataigh* per major division might be compared with the suggested divisions in Islay. Each of the six major (parish) divisions here have three subdivisions comprising 3 reconstructed 5 M units – *ie.* 9 recontructed ouncelands in total. A system wherein each parish comprised three equal parts would also facilitate the standard pattern of tithal appropriation known from the Irish material, whereby one third of the parish tithes were due to the bishop, one third to the rector and one third to the vicar (*cf.* Ní Ghabhláin 1996:46).



1: Parish divisions c. 1749

2: 'Rectory' divisions prior to c. 1749

3: Suggested boundaries of Islay's medieval parishes

4: Reconstructed Cill- units

Figure 62: Major ecclesiastical divisions in Islay

A second, although not necessarily exclusive explanation, is that the *Cill-* units *per se* were never intended as parish centres. Contrary to popular belief, the element *cill-* is not particularly common in parish names in Scotland, Ireland or Man. In Scotland as a whole, for example, little more than 10% of all parish names contain the generic *cill* (*cf.* Cowan 1967). While the original meaning of this appellative is a 'cell or church' (Chapter 7), it appears to have become obsolete at a fairly early stage. In Islay, however, it remained productive until comparatively recently, albeit with the specialist, transferred meaning of 'graveyard'. As at least some of the postulated *Cill-*units appear to have been coterminous with compact secular territories, it follows that the families who controlled these territories might have chosen to be buried in them.

It is possible, therefore, that the primary function of each Islay *Cill-* unit was as an officially sanctioned burial ground. While each of these burial grounds would probably have had an attendant chapel, only one in every three appears to have had parish status. That the vast majority of them appear to have names in *Cill-* suggests that the system was not only late, but also largely independent from long-standing local territorial terminology. That does not mean, however, that it did not have a basis in pre-existing territorial divisions. Of the 18 suggested *Cill-* units, at least two have names which might reasonably point to pre-existing territorial units – Kilnave, where the specific element appears to be the ON *ex nomine* onomastic unit **Nef*, referring to the promontory on which the farm-district sits; and Orsay, once again marking proximity to a topographical feature and possible territory – in this case of ON **Áróss*.

As 11 of the 18 proposed *Cill-* centres are located in 5 M units which also contain a primary Norse settlement-name, and the remaining 7 all contain Norse place-name material of one type or another, it must be wondered whether the *Cill-*district names reflect the deliberate marginalisation or replacement of pre-existing ON territorial designations by incoming speakers of Gaelic.

8.5.5 The Origins of the *Cill-* units

In terms of ecclesiastical divisions, it could be argued that the island was split variously into 3, 6 and most probably also 18 parts. These divisions can be rationalised as follows – 3 rectories, 6 parishes and 18 *Cill-* units intended primarily as officially sanctioned (ancestral) burial districts. As all three levels in this system appear to share the same boundary systems as the smaller land-divisions outlined above, it seems likely that they were based largely on pre-existing units. By comparing this series of remarkably uniform divisions with the evidence from better documented parts of *Scotia Scandinavica*, it might be possible to show whether the Islay structure represents Norse innovation or Norse appropriation of an older system.

8.5.5.1 The Orkney data II

In addition to urislands and pennylands, the Orkney sources also mention a unit known as the skatland. Although both 'ouncelands' and 'pennylands' might be described as 'skatlands' in the sense that they were lands attracting 'skat' or tax, Marwick (1949:1) highlights a second, narrower, use of this term wherein the skatland is equated with 4.5 Orkney pennylands – *ie.* one quarter of an Orkney urisland.

After much deliberation as to the function of these units, it was suggested by Marwick that they were related to the old Norwegian system of naval defence known as *leiðangr*. The essence of this system is that a territory is divided into a number of units, known as *skipreiðir*, each of which is bound to supply one ship of a legally determined minimum size (usually 13 benches or 26 thwarts) and to equip it with a crew. The burden of providing these services was divided equally between the smaller units in this system – known as the *manngerd* in the west of Norway or *lide* in the east (KLNM X:534-7) – with each being liable to provide one man for the levy (see KLNM X:431-442).

It seems likely from the provisions of the medieval Norwegian law-codes that the full levy in 13th century Norway would have consisted of about 300 ships. While *Gulaþingslag* puts the figure at 308, 'Magnus Lagabøtes testament' from 1277 lists 279 'skipreider' (KLMN XV:547). The full *leiðangr*, however, was a rarity which could only be raised in the event of actual or threatened invasion. In practise, the Norwegian king was only permitted to call out a half *leiðangr*, and even then not more frequently than annually, for aggressive ventures of his own (Marwick 1949:4). This service, which was a personal obligation, could be waived on payment of a fee known as '*bord-leding*'. As time went on, however, the obligation in general was commuted to an annual charge on farms, serving as the basis for the first definite land-tax in Norway (Marwick 1949:4; but see KLNM X:431-442 for a more detailed explanation).

Although this system is clearly laid out in the Norwegian *landslov* of the 13th century (*Gulaþingslag*, *Frostaþingslag etc.*) and supported by evidence from the 'contemporary' sagas of Kings Sverrir Sigurðarson and Hákon Hákonarson (see KLNM XV:546-551) its origins are obscure. While most scholars agree that the system was first established by Hákon the Good, son of Harald Fairhair, in the mid 10th century, Gareth Williams (1997:23) has recently suggested on philological grounds that 'some form of the *leiðangr* system actually predates Hákon's supposed institutions of *c.* 955'. It should be noted, however, that William's theory is based on Marstrander's etymology of one Old Irish borrowing from ON OI *láideng* – and as such is evidence only of the pre 955 existence of the word and not the system of naval administration with which it was associated in later MSS.

By detailed study of the early rentals, Marwick (1949:5-6) was able to establish a direct correspondence between the *landskyld* or tax paid on the Norwegian *manngerd* and the skat paid on the Orkney skatland. While there appear to have been around 200 urislands in medieval Orkney (Steinnes 1959:39), only around 175 of these seem to have been taxed, with the remainder presumably being Church or earldom

land and therefore exempt (Marwick 1949:6-7). With four skatlands each, these 175 urislands would provide a levy of *c.* 700 men. By assuming a minimum ship size of 20 benches – average by later medieval Norwegian standards – Marwick (1949:7) estimated a minimum fleet size of 17 ships – a figure supported by the description of the battle of Tankerness in Chapter 65 of *Orkneyinga saga* and independently corroborated by Orkney historian Storer Clouston (1927-8).

8.5.5.2 The *Senchus* IV

As we have already seen, the earliest detailed evidence for naval administration in Scotland comes from the *Senchus fer nAlban.* According to the *Senchus*, the Dalriadan naval levy was based on (un-named) groupings of '20 tech' units. The total of 1410 tech recorded for Dalriada as a whole implies the existence of 70.5 such units. If each of these was charged with the supply of <dá> s<h>echts<h>es<s> (Dumville 2002:202). '2 x 7 benchers', which might reasonably be taken to imply 2 thwarts per bench and one helmsman per ship, this would suggest a minimum naval levy of 70.5 x 30 or 2115 men – about three times the suggested figure for Orkney.

While accepting the general antiquity of this text, Lamont (1958:100) took the complete absence of Irish parallels for the '20-tech' unit as an indication that they were a legacy of the 'Gael-Gall' (*sic.*) and that this part of the *Senchus* at least illustrated the situation in Argyll *c.* 1266. This interpretation was, however, heavily influenced by Skene's dating of the document to the 14th century. It takes no account of the major topographical differences which distinguish the Dalriadan archipelago from the unified land-mass of Ireland – and thus the scope for significsntly different organisational models – or Bannerman's subsequent tracing of the earliest form of the text to the mid 10th century. Besides, if the '20 tech' unit of the *Senchus* were equated with the presumed Orcadian *skipreiðr*, this would mean that 20 tech were equivalent to 10 urislands and that Islay, with its possible 350 tech, had a taxable extent of around 170 ouncelands. Given that Orkney is considerably larger, less mountainous and less boggy than Islay, this seems unlikely.

8.5.5.3 Comparison II

Although care must be taken when comparing different systems of military administration used in different areas at different times,[209] application of the formulae of the *Senchus* and the Orkney rentals to the suggested *Cill*-units in Islay, yields some very inetersting results.

It is difficult to say for certain whether the 350 tech associated with Islay in the survey section of the *Senchus* were all in Islay. If accepted, however, this would translate into 17.5 '20 tech' units. Even after allowances are made for the list being incomplete or containing non-Islay-based land-holdings, this shows a striking correspondence with the 18 reconstructed *Cill*-unit outlined above.

[209] See Easson (1987:7-8) for further examples of '*x* ships of *y* oars per *z* "extent" of land' in the documentary sources.

Parallels can also be found, however, between the suggested Islay *Cill-* units and the presumed Orcadian *leiðangr* system. Given the Orcadian system of 1 man per ¼ urisland, we might expect Islay's 55 reconstructed ouncelands to supply a minimum of around 220 men or enough for 6 ships – the equivalent of 1 ship per medieval parish.[210] Considering the differences in area and agricultural potential between Orkney and Islay, it seems reasonable that the naval obligations of Islay under a common ON system should be around one third that of Orkney.

Taken together, these observations seems to suggest that while the boundaries of the 20 tech groupings of the *Senchus* survived from Dalriadan times to the post-Norse period, the individual tech units, if they ever existed as physical entities, did not. In the later Middle Ages, these old 20 tech units appear to have formed the basis of the suggested *Cill-* units, with groupings of them forming the Norse *skipreiðir* units which went on to become parishes.

8.5.5.4 Church holdings, the Senchus and continuity of resort to religious sites

A connection between the '20-tech' unit of the *Senchus* and the later extent of £10 was previously suggested by Lamont (1957, 1958). While he also attempted to demonstrate a direct link between the total extent of Islay in the late 15th century and 320 of the tech in the Islay list, this further conclusion rests on a number of assumptions which cannot be substantiated. Although Lamont's exclusion of Ros Deorand from the Islay list may be justified, we have no way of knowing if the remaining holdings are limited to Islay or exhaustive (see above). His estimation of the total extent of the island on the basis of Charters from 1494, 1499 and 1506 relies on a series of clerical errors and amendments (1958:93-6). Fatally, however, this includes an assumption that the value of Church lands in Islay the late 15th century had remained unchanged since Dalriadan times.

It is clear from the records of mainland Scotland, that the tradition of alienating lands to the Church did not reach its peak until well after the introduction of the parish system (*cf.* Cowan 1960). And while the evidence for Islay is admittedly scant, it would nevertheless be hard to imagine that the gifts of Ranald MacSomerled, 'Good' John of Islay and others to the Church did not include new grants of land (Chapter 7). If the incoming Norse had come to some accommodation regarding existing church lands in Islay – as they seem to have done at least temporarily with (some of) the 'papar' in the insular Pictish area (*cf.* Crawford 2002; Owen 2004) – we might, moreover, expect to find some ON *kirk-* or *papar* names in Islay. As none are recorded it might be argued that any direct continuity of administration, terminology or nomenclature was minimal.

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[210] This number also appears to find parallel in the charter of 1313 wherein Robert the Bruce conveyed the Isle of Man to Randolph, Earl of Moray, with one of the conditions being that he should place annually at the king's disposal 6 ships of 26 oars each. While Marstrander (1934:344) originally took this as a restatement of the old, Norse *leiðangr* system in Man, this association was heavily influenced by his interpretation of Manx 'sheading' as ON *skeið(ar)þing* ['war-ship district'] (1934:341-5). In 1937, however, he revised this to ON *séttungr*, 'sixth part' (1937:430-1). Considering, moreover, that there were roughly equal numbers of Manx treens and Orcadian ouncelands and that both of these units had roughly equal values (*cf.* Marwick 1949), it seems unlikely that the naval obligations on Man should extend to only 6 ships when those on Orkney appear to have extended to 17 (see above).

Further attention can be drawn here to the core land-holdings in the 1617 Tenandry of Lossit – *ie.* those around Lossit in Kilmeny. While the names of the farm-districts in this area are almost exclusively Gaelic, those of many known Church holdings in other parts of the island – especially in W Kilarrow and NE Kilchoman – are either ON or contain ON *ex nomine* onomastic units (Figures 36 & 37). On superficial examination, this could be taken to suggest that the lands in Kilmeny had belonged to the Church since before the Norse *adventus*, while those in Kilarrow, for example, were only added later, by which point the farm-districts in that area had acquired ON names. Considering that the G core of the Tenandry of Lossit flanks the Lordship centre of Finlaggan, however, it might also be argued that this is the result of the post-Norse plantation of (prestigious) G settlers and their subsequent gifts to the Church. That the area around Lossit still boasts several imposing natural features – *eg.* Dùn Bhoraraic and Eas Forsa – with names based on ON material, points to the previous prevalence of Norse language use and indirectly to the demographic erosion, or perhaps even deliberate replacement of other Norse name-material.

8.5.6 Where are Islay's ON administrative names?

While there is no direct evidence for a Norse style administration in the documentary record, we should not necessarily expect there to be. Despite the comparative longevity of the Scandinavian kings of Man, for example, there is no documentary evidence for the existence of the Manx treens or the district status of the six Manx sheadings until the 15th century – long after the English take-over (Reilly 1988:19 & 22). Given the particularly vibrant nature of the Gaelic renaissance in Islay, there is every possibility that Norse administrative terminology was deliberately replaced before the keeping of documentary records became commonplace and thus with a few notable exceptions – such as the *herað* (n) or 'administrative district' of 'Ye Herries'; the *þing* (n) or 'assembly' of Sunderland; and the district name Lanndaidh < ON **Landeyjar* in Kilchoman – irrevocably lost. There are, however, certain patterns in the landscape which might help us to identify others.

Three and six part administrative divisions of the type illustrated by Islay's feudal Ward and later medieval parish systems may not be documented in the *Senchus fer nAlban* or common in Ireland. They do, however, find suspiciously close parallels in other parts of the Scandinavian world. There are the 'thirds' of Orkney recorded in OS (*cf.* Clouston 1919:15-28); the 'Ridings' (ON **þriðjungir* 'thirds') of Yorkshire (Ekwall 1925); the three-part divisions of each Icelandic Quarter district into *várþing*, 'spring assemblies' (Karlsson 2000:20-7); and the later three-fold grouping of the smaller, Icelandic *hreppar*, 'communes', for judicial purposes, in the form of the *þriggja hreppa þing* (KLNMXVIII:359-60). Division into sixths is a documented part of the medieval administrative systems fn Man, where the myriad *treens* are grouped into six *sheadings*, from ON *séttungr*, 'a sixth part' (Marstrander 1937:430-1); of mainland Scandinavia and the Baltic island of Gotland (*cf.* KLNM XV:164-7; Steinnes 1959). Close reading of *Orkneyinga saga* and the way in which the archipelago's halves and thirds appear to have changed hands without practical difficulties led Asgaut Steinnes (1959:36-46) to suggest that were similar divisions in Orkney.

The focus of Steinnes' theory was place-names derived from ON **Húsabýr/ *Húsabœr*. In Scandinavia, these were technical terms for 'royal administrative farm[s] of a military character', thought to have acted as the central places of administrative districts known as *hundare* (corresponding to the Anglo-Saxon term 'hundred') and originating perhaps in the Uppland region of Sweden sometime before the middle of the 7th century (*ibid.*:36). The old Upplandic districts of Tiundaland and Åttundaland, for example, contained 10 and 8 hundare units respectively (see also KLNM XVIII:402-3).

Steinnes argued on the basis of *Ynglingatal* and *Ynglingasaga* that this 'Husaby' system was carried to the Vestfold in eastern Norway by the Upplandic Yngling dynasty in the 8th century, from where it was introduced to the W districts of Trøndelag and Nordmøre/Romsdal around AD 900 by the expansionist Vestfold king Harald Fairhair (*op. cit.*:36-7). It is from here that Steinnes suggests the 'Husaby' system was carried to Orkney.

Although only four 'Husaby' settlements are known in Orkney – Housby on Stronsay, Housebay on Shapinsay, Husabae on Rousay and Housebay on Birsay (*cf.* Marwick 1952) – Steinnes (1959:39) suggests that the old, earls' residence at Orphir, known locally as the 'bu of Orphir', should also be added to that list. As this leaves the islands divided into five parts – four roughly equal divisions of 35/36, 35, 34½ and 34½ urislands and one of 59 urislands – Steinnes (1959:43) argued that there must have been a sixth centre dividing the district consisting of Stronsay, Sanday, Eday, North Ronaldsay and Papa Westray. With the bays of Otterswick and Kettletoft forming a natural N-S boundary between Stronsay, East Sanday and the other parts of this group, the most likely candidate was the substantial farm of Braeswick in the SW of Sanday (*ibid.*:41-2).

According to Steinnes (*ibid.*:44-5), this 6-part administrative system may have been introduced to Orkney and possibly Man, following Harald Finehair's expedition 'west over the ocean' (Pálsson & Edwards 1981:26-7). The Northern Isles and Man mark the extremes of the area supposedly subdued by Harald during this expedition and defined the known distribution of the future ounceland units of land denomination. In Steinnes opinion, however, itwas earl Rögnvaldr of Møre, rather than Harald who introduced the system after gaining control of Orkney and Shetland from Harald following the battle of Hafrsfjörd (*op. cit.*:45-6). In so doing, Rognvald may simply have been expanding a process he had previously applied to the southern parts of Møre and the northern half of Romsdal after being installed as chieftain by Harald and sworn to 'defend the coast from enemies' (*Haralds saga hárfagra* Chapter 10).

Although subsequent writers such as Thomson (1987:28) have dismissed Steinnes' theory as 'informed guess-work', it does provide a plausible explanation for an otherwise poorly understood aspect of Orkney's administrative history. With minor amendments, it might also be possible to expand this model to Islay. MacDougall's map of Islay shows three settlement names containing the ON generic *býr* (see Chapter 7). Interestingly, each of these farm-districts can be found in a different medieval parish (Figure

63). While none of these names are known to have denoted administrative units, it may be significant that Ballinaby with its Viking Age burials is very close to Kilchoman, which once served as the 'summer residence' of the MacDonalds; and that Conisby is traditionally associated with Godred Crovan (*cf.* Appendix I). There is a possibility, however, that this latter tradition is garbled and actually preserves a memory of an earlier Norse king, perhaps even Harald *hárfagr*.

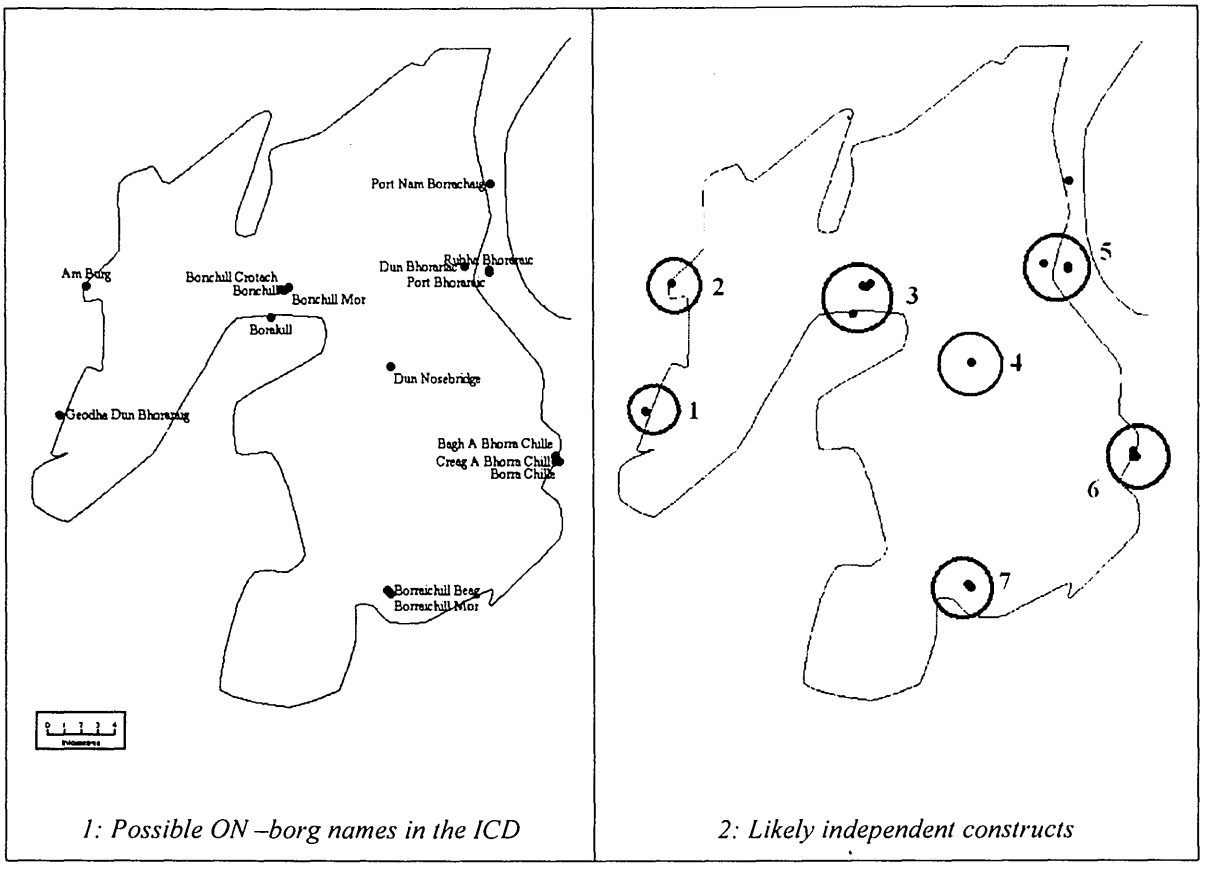
Kilchiaran:	**Conisby – ON **Konungsbýr***
Kilchoman:	**Ballinaby – ON **Baile na (býr)***
Kilarrow:	**Neraby – ON **Niðrabýr***
Kilmeny:	**?**
Kilnaughton:	**?**
Kildalton:	**?**

Figure 63: Islay Húsabýjar?

While it would perhaps be imprudent to pursue this particular model too far, there are other place-names which point to the existence of regular administrative division in the island during or perhaps even prior to the Norse period. Take, for example, those containing the ON element *borg* (f), 'fortification'. As can be seen from Figure 64, the ICD points to 8 locations where we might at one point have expected to find an independent ON *–borg* name. With the exception of Port Nam Borrachaig in Kilmeny – which may have been coined by association with the group of similar names several kilometres to the S – all of these names are closely associated with Iron Age Fortifications. Moreover, all of these fortifications are of the larger type classified by the RCAHMS as 'forts' (see Chapter 2) or, in the case of Dùn Bhoraraic in Kilmeny, of the more exotic type known in more northerly areas as 'brochs'. Although around 90 dry-stone IAFs have been identified in Islay (Chapter 2), the limited yet regular use (or survival) of the ON appellative *borg* suggests that its semantic range in Islay was rather more specific than 'fortification' in general. It could be argued, for example, that the 7 sites identified here were used in some kind of administrative capacity by the island's Dalriadan inhabitants before their zones of influence were adopted by the incoming Norse.

If so, and there were indeed seven of these districts, it might prompt a highly speculative re-interpretation of Sunderland ['ʃu?nar?tiŋ] in Kilchoman as ON **Sjúhundaþing*, 'the assembly place of the seven hundreds',[211] with reflexes of the original 'hundreds' perhaps being found in Cnoc Undail, Brahunisary and Tùndal.[212]

[211] See discussion of *-þing* in Chapter 7 and of Sunderland in Kilchoman in Appendix I.
[212] See notes on *Ellister in Kilchoman and Kilbride and Àirigh nam Beist in Kildalton in Appendix I.



1: Possible ON –borg names in the ICD

2: Likely independent constructs

Figure 64: ON –borg names in Islay

Alternatively, given that (Dùn) Nosebridge in Kilarrow is the only settlement name in this list, its exclusion would leave one independent *–borg* name per medieval 'parish' or suggested ON *skipreiðr* district.

The existence of this kind of district finds some corroboration in the Papal Constitution of 9th December 1203 'confirming the rights of the Abbey of Iona in certain matters' (BI:5-8). Of the various lands listed therein, those of Magenburg, Mangecheles and Herilnean appear to have been in Islay. The fact that none of them survived beyond this point in administrative tradition may indicate that they are old district-names pre-dating the MacSorley re-organisation of Church administration. Significantly, however, as Magenburg can be linked to Loch Moyburg, now Loch Lossit, in Kilmeny (Chapter 7) – and perhaps therefore the lanholdings set out in the Tenandry of Lossit, it may preserve the name of the *–borg* district suggested by the nearby Dùn Bhoraraic.

Potential echoes of an ON administrative system might also be sought in the remit and format of the *Comhairle* or 'Council' of the Isles, known to have operated during the days of the Lordship (Chapter 3). While the recorded terminology and practices of this assembly appear to be Gaelic, its judicial function and Isles-wide representation could well point to origins in the *Lagmannaibh na n-Innsedh* - the *Lögmenn* of the Isles recorded in AFM (960.14, 970.13) – perhaps through an intermediate infrastructure put in

place by the Manx kings of the Isles (*cf.* Caldwell 2004:80-5). Although Megaw (1976:19-25) is able to identify or suggest pre-Norse, or other Celtic origins for the major features of the Manx Assembly, the fact remains that the names of its more important elements are ON – *eg.* the assembly place at Tynwald hill, from ON **Þingvöllr*, 'assembly field' (*cf.* Fellows-Jensen 1993:58), the House of Keys, from ON *kviðr*, 'jury' (Marstrander 1934:353-4) and the administrative divisions known as sheadings, from ON *séttungr*, 'sixth part' (Marstrander 1937:430-1);

If the language of this system became Norse, it is entirely possible that other aspects of it were also drawn from Norse tradition. Both the Manx parliament and the Lordship assembly at Finlaggan, for example, appear to have taken place around midsummer and been accompanied by a fair. While this has clear parallels with the traditional Irish *óenaige* (Doherty 1980:85; Comber 2001:89; Jaski 2000:50-6; Caldwell 2004:84-5), equally close parallels could be drawn with the Iceland *Alþing*, which also met around midsummer and appears from saga evidence to have been accompanied by fair-like activities (KLNM I:123-6). It is also possible, however, that the incoming MacSorley dynasty made (facile) alterations to this system to demonstrate their authority. One such change may have been the relocation of the Islay assembly from Sunderland (**Sjóvarþing*) to Eilean na Comhairle.

Norway	**Orkney**	**Isle of Man**	**Western littoral & islands**	**Islay**	***Senchus fer nAlban***
	c. 99 000 Ha	*c.* 57 200 Ha		*c.* 61 500 Ha	(Argyll & Bute: *c.* 690 000 Ha)
	2 Halves	2 Deemsters			
	3 Þriðjungir			3 Feudal Wards (Modern Parishes)	
	6 'Husebyar'?	6 séttungir			
Skipreiður	24 Modern Parishes (but 17 skipreiðir)	17 Parishes		6 'Medieval Parishes'/ *skipreiðar*	
				18 *Cill*-units?	'20-tech' unit
				c. 33 reconstructed T-U @ 10M OE	
	*c.*200 Urisland @ *c.* 6 M OE	*c.*216 Treen @ *c* .6 M OE	Tírunga/ terra unciata *c.* 6 M OE	*c.* 55, reconstructed 5 M units	
				124 Islay Quarterlands (1507) @ 2.5 M OE	
Manngerd/ lide	*c.*800 Skattlands @ *c.* 1.5 M OE	*c.* 860 Kerroos @ *c.* 1.5 M OE	Cearramh 1 – 1.5 M OE	*c.* 220, ¼ reconstructed ounceland units	
					tech
	Pennyland (18)		Pennyland (20)	Cowland (20)	

Figure 65: Administrative units in Norway, the Norse colonies, Islay and the Senchus fer nAlban

8.6 Conclusions

Interdisciplinary analysis of the early fiscal data suggests that the documented Islay 'Quarterland' may well have been a later medieval innovation masking the existence of an earlier territorial standard with an Old Extent equivalent of 5 M. It is possible to identify these earlier units in the landscape by reference to the extant fiscal, cartographic and archaeological material. Contrary to previous assessments of Islay's administrative heritage, these reconstructed 5 M units differ very little from the better documented ouncelands of *Scotia Scandinavica.* Like their Orcadian and Shetlandic counterparts, the Islay 'ouncelands' appear to be fundamental settlement units in the sense that they are likely to have contained all of the economic and cultural resources needed to support a standard size of community. While the regular distribution of Iron Age fortifications between these units suggests that the units themselves were older than the Norse *adventus*, the fact that the vast majority of them contain at least one farm-district with a high status ON settlement name suggests they were appropriated by Norse incomers at a relatively early stage of the settlement process. Where this is not the case, the associated Gaelic generics tend to be late and/or supported by an array of secondary Norse settlement names, pointing perhaps to the Norse adaptation of pre-existing prestige names or the later replacement of Norse prestige names with Gaelic equivalents.

Study of these 5 M units in conjunction with the distribution of *cill-* names and known ecclesiastical sites reveals what appears to be a highly regular and hierarchical system of ecclesiastical administration. While it seems that these *Cill-* units functioned primarily as funerary districts and were late in terms of nomenclature, closer scrutiny points to origins in the '20-tech' naval defence units of the *Senchus fer nAlban.* The apparent circumscription of these units into groups of three appears to have formed the basis of the island's medieval parishes. While this may also have been a feature of the Dalriadan administrative system, comparison with Orcadian material suggests that it survived through adaptation by the Norse incomers into a *leiðangr* system of naval defence.

The survival of otherwise undocumented Dalriadan administrative divisions through Norse intermediaries is not, however, inconsistent with the disappearance of the individual tech unit or the presumed 'districts' of the *Senchus*. It would simply suggest that Norse contact with the native administration was perfunctory and concerned only with information that would ease first of all the extraction of tribute from locals and later, the division and administration of the island by Norse settlers. Rather than focus on the personal land-holdings of important Islay families and their quantification according to an unfamiliar system of land-division, it seems more likely that the Norse would have concentrated on the number of 'communities', *ie.* 'ounceland' units and the location of local and regional administrative centres. By so doing, they could adopt the boundaries and divisions of the pre-existing system without necessarily inheriting its terminology, nomenclature or even inhabitants.

CHAPTER 9: SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

9.1 The extent of Norse settlement

It is still generally assumed that the Norse impact on Islay and the Inner Hebrides was considerably less extensive than in more northerly parts of maritime Scotland (*cf.* Andersen 1991:132). The two main grounds for this assumption are the documentary accounts of a Gaelic presence in the area both before and after the Viking Age and the higher ratio of Gaelic to Norse farm-names in Islay than Lewis (*cf.* Thomas 1874-6, 1881-2; Oftedal 1954). As we have now seen, however, there are numerous difficulties in taking either of these observations as proof of either unbroken Gaelic hegemony or minimal and unassuming Norse settlement in the area.

In point of fact, there are no near contemporary references to Islay between the *terrimotus* or 'earthquake' of AD 740 (AU 740.3) and the obit of Manx king Godred Crovan who died '*in insula quae vocatur Yle*' around 1095 (CRM§23). Moreover, as there are no remotely detailed references to the inhabitants of Islay between Adomnán of Iona's early 8th century *Vita Columbae* and its acquisition by Somerled in 1156, there is no *prima facia* evidence that the island was controlled by Gaels during this period. This absence of evidence is countered to a certain extent by the later medieval Icelandic saga material. While neither contemporary with the events it describes nor specific to Islay, there are no indications in the sagas that the Inner Hebrides were even partly Gaelic-speaking during this time. On the contrary, the implication appears to be that the area was a fully integrated part of the Norse world and remained so at least into the 11th century and in some places beyond.

Superficial examination of modern OS maps has shown that Islay's Gaelic place-names outnumber their Norse counterparts by a large margin. Presenting this data as a simple ratio, however, is to presume that all names are of equal importance in the study of settlement history and to ignore the mechanisms by which certain types of place-name are more likely to survive periods of demographic and linguistic change when others might be lost. In terms of farm-districts, for example, and especially those which are known to have been important before the agrarian reforms and settlement re-organisation of the late 18th and 19th centuries, it is clear that no substantial part of Islay escaped Norse settlement names. Contrary to previous assumptions, Norse settlement was not restricted to coastal areas, poor-quality land or any other kind of enclave. Indeed, for these names to have survived *in situ* so long after the island's Norse period suggests that the island as a whole was at one point dominated by speakers of Norse.

The same is also true of nature-names. While patently or partially Norse examples now make up only a small percentage of the total, these are invariably amongst the most dominant in every part of the island that has significant topographic features. Relative to the island's G nature-names, many more of them can be considered '*bygdens navn*' which have survived periods of demographic change by virtue of their widespread user-group. That the language of this wider community was once Norse and only later gave

way to Gaelic is shown by the large number of dependent, G place-names containing ON *ex nomine* onomastic units that can still be found throughout the island today.

Perhaps the greatest flaw in the 'place-name ratio' approach to settlement history in the Hebrides is the tendency to side-line or simply ignore the numerous, significant changes which have taken place in its language, population and naming traditions since the height of the Viking Age. This must be considered especially problematic in the case of Islay where large-scale 'plantations' of Gaelic speaking farm-workers are known from the 17th century and can be reasonably implied for several earlier periods. While both Gaelic and Norse names may have been lost as a result of this or later population displacement or redistribution, any new names coined to take their place could only be in Gaelic or (Scots) English but not Norse – resulting in the steady dilution of Islay's localised Norse nomenclature. This process will have been hastened considerably, however, by the G adaptation of pre-existing Norse place-names – as can be seen from examples like Beinn Tart a'Mhill < G *beinn* + ON **Hartafjall*, 'Stagfell' (see notes on Kelsay in Kilchoman); the translation of ON material into G – such as G *Bun Abhainne* from ON **Áróss* 'River Mouth' (see notes on Orsay in Kilchoman); and most probably also the conscious replacement of ON material with G neologisms.

9.2 The nature of Norse settlement

Subjective reading of the early annalistic material has seen the popular equation of early Norse activity in the Hebrides with simple piracy, not necessarily connected with the later phase of settlement (*cf.* Crawford 1987:39-47; Nicolaisen 1994:40-1). When the contemporary evidence for 'Viking' raids is interpreted in terms of the realities of the time, however, and not just tired Romantic clichés, it is difficult not to see them as overtly political acts. As such, there is no reason why they should not be regarded as integral parts of a longer term plan concerned with the subjugation and colonisation of the area rather than the single-minded theft of its 'moveable wealth'.

The Dalriadan population encountered by the early Norse raiders appears to have been one obsessed with social status. As this status was derived largely from land, all land is likely to have been owned and jealously guarded by a society known from the *Senchus fer nAlban* to have been organised on a war-footing. As a result, the only way the incoming Norsemen could have acquired heritable property was by sale, gift or theft from the local population. While major land-holders may have been willing to alienate parcels of 'real-estate' for political reasons, it is unlikely that their less well-endowed counterparts would have been quite so keen to suffer the concomitant loss of status. Considering the widespread and regular distribution of Islay's surviving Norse place-names, therefore, it is hard to imagine that most Norse settlement was not achieved through coercion of one sort or another, most probably violent.

It seems likely from a variety of pre-Norse material, including Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* and King Ine of Wessex' late 7th century law-code, that the most conspicuous feature of ethnic and, to a certain extent, political identity in early medieval Britain was language. Considering that

this period precedes the advent of mass education, political correctness and easy access to an impartial media, it would have been relatively easy for expansionist Norse warlords to demonise the native population on the basis of language alone. As a result, there would have been far greater scope for the perpetration and justification of terrible atrocities than we might now hope was possible. Although perhaps distasteful, possible parallels can be drawn between events in Viking Age Scotland and Hitler's plans to carve out *lebensraum* in Eastern Europe, the Soviet clearance of the German-speaking population from Pomerania and East Prussia after the Second World War, the mass expulsion of Palestinians from Israel during the Arab-Israeli war of 1948-9 or the 'ethnic cleansing' activities of Serbs and Croats in the Balkans in the 1990s. And there are others. While historical optimists might point to the mechanised nature of these events and their unsuitability as a parallels for a less advanced era, attention can be drawn to the recent Rwandan Genocide which reached its bloody peak in 1994 when an estimated 800,000 Tutsis were slaughtered by Hutu machete-men.[213]

One important difference between these 20th century events, however, and those following the Norse *adventus* in Scotland is their physical background. The former took place in large continental districts, where basic logistic problems may have hindered the progress of the aggressors or aided the resistance or escape of their victims. Transfer the same kind of scenario to western, maritime Scotland in the early Middle Ages and the scope for atrocity would have been magnified enormously. In this kind of insular environment, it would have been perfectly feasible for Norse fleets to surround individual islands and exterminate, round up or drive away their entire populations before any help might arrive. This is precisely what happened in the Vestmannaeyjar (Ic 'Westmen Islands') off the southern coast of Iceland in the early 17th century.

In 1627, four pirate ships from Algeria and Morocco set sail for Iceland under the command of Dutch renegade Jan Jantzen. One of the ships landed off Grindavík in the south, capturing fifteen Icelanders and a few Danes along with a cargo ship and its crew, before threatening the royal residence at Bessastaðir. Two others headed for the East Fjords where they captured 110 of the locals and killed at least a further nine, before joining the fourth ship and heading for the Westmen Islands. Within two days of arriving at Heimaey, the main island in the archipelago, the crews of these three ships had captured 242 people, burned down the church and warehouses and left the mutilated bodies of 30 or 40 other locals and their livestock strewn across the island.[214]

Although Heimaey is about one quarter the size of Islay, it was effectively depopulated by three boatloads of pirates. Doubtless one ship could have achieved the same result over a slightly longer period. But had there been 50 ships instead of three, and had their primary concern been colonisation instead of piracy, it is quite probable that it would not just have been the inhabitants of Heimaey but those of Iceland as a whole who were carried off or put to the sword. This is almost certainly what we should envisage for

[213] http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/1288230.stm (accessed 4 July 2005).
[214] See Hængsson & Hrólfsson 1852; Þorkelsson 1906-9; Kristjánsson 1969; Karlsson 2000:143-5.

early Norse activity in Islay and the Inner Hebrides. Large Norse fleets are known to have been active around the coasts and waterways of Ireland (AU 837.3, 849.6, 852.3), which were capable of large scale population displacement (AU 871.2, AU 951.3). If, as seems likely, the earlier of these originated or at the very least assembled in the Hebrides before sailing for Ireland, it is possible that the area had already been subjugated (*cf.* Ó Corráin 1998,1998b). Given the size of the fleets involved, it is also possible that large parts of it had been forcibly cleared. Recent studies of DNA have proved that the Norse colonists of the Outer Hebrides included women (Jennings & Kruse 2005:258-9). That such a movement should still be discernible after a millennium of genetic interaction with the outside world raises the possibility of Norse plantations at the expense of the local population, perhaps even to the extent of their extermination.

If the Gaelic language did survive on Islay from Dalriadan times, it is likely to have been at a servile and particularly wretched level. Otherwise we might have expected some evidence of cultural blending in the island's place-names. While this appears to have happened at the end of the Norse period when the island became Gaelic speaking once again, there are no examples of ON names containing G *ex nomine* onomastic units which might point to a corresponding process during its opening stages. That is not to say that no pre-Norse place-names have survived to the present day. While no certain examples of this type have been identified, their (hypothetical) survival through the Viking Age should probably be seen as a reflex of the Norse take-over. The names of strategic locations and important farms in particular are likely to have entered the Norse nomenclature as a result of early reconnaissance or tribute gathering operations.

There is no reason, however, why even a servile population of Gaelic-speakers need reflect the island's pre-Norse inhabitants. If the original population was enslaved by the Norse, it would hardly make sense to keep them in an area where they knew the lie of the land and might be able to draw on pre-existing support networks to escape or, worse still, kill their new masters. In fact, if the evidence now emerging from other parts of the Hebrides is correct and is applicable to Islay, there is a possibility that the origins of Islay's modern Gaelic traditions can be attributed to the Norse themselves – through the importation of slaves, craftsmen or investors from Gaelic speaking Ireland (*cf.* Jennings & Kruse 2005:255-6).

Similarly, while there is some evidence for continuity in estate boundaries and even administrative districts from Dalriadan times into the post-Norse period, it must be considered significant that this does not involve the preservation of their pre-Norse names or the fundamental unit in that administrative system, the Dalriadan *tech*. That the Norse appear to have adopted the '20 tech' units of the *Senchus* and an otherwise unattested local division equivalent to the later *tirunga*, *treens* and *urisland* of other parts of *Scotia Scandinavica*, need not point to anything but the most basic of interaction between Norse colonists and the local population. That none of the territorial *designata* of the *Senchus* have survived intact, while at least two originally Norse district names have done – *ie. Na Herradh*, from ON **Herað*, 'administrative district', in Kilmeny and *Lanndaidh*, from ON **Landey(jar)*, 'Island district', in Kildalton – suggests that little more than the outlines of earlier districts were preserved.

9.3 How long did the Norse period last?

While it is possible that the Norse settlement of Islay began around the time of the early raids in the West, it seems likely that colonisation proper was a later phenomenon. By 847, however, and the entry in ASB recording the Norsemen taking possession of all the isles around Ireland, it was probably well under way. Even assuming a total clearance of the island's population, it is possible that Norse dealings with Ireland led to the re-introduction of Gaelic speech and ideology at a relatively early stage. The importation of slaves and the need to converse with Irish nobles and their holy men may have resulted in a limited amount of conversion to Christianity. However, the complete absence of *kirk-* names and apparent absence of any other classic 'inversion compounds' suggests that early changes were largely superficial. Indeed, there is no evidence for a mixed 'Gall Gaidheil' language user group of the type envisaged for Man by Marstrander (1915) and Megaw (1976) and Galloway by Brooke (1991).

Amongst the upper echelons of Islay society at least, Norse cultural stoicism, as evinced by grave goods, appears to have remained strong until the turn of the 11th century. The reasons for this are no doubt tied to the continual waves of influence from other Norse areas suggested by the activities of Ketil flatnose and Harald finehair in the second half of the 9th century and the activities of the kings of Dublin and Man in the later 10th century. After this, however, one key event is likely to have seen drastic changes in local prestige outlook – the violent promotion of Christianity as the official religion of the Norse world by Olaf Tryggvason in the closing years of the 10th century. Thereafter, the cultural floodgates were opened to Gaelic influence and it would only have been a matter of time before the prestige cultural and linguistic focus in Islay began to gravitate once again towards Gaelic Ireland.

As an important part of the Manx Kingdom of the Isles, Islay may been subject to a similar level of Irish influence as Man itself. From the rise of Godred Crovan, if not earlier, there is evidence for the use of Gaelic at the Manx court (*cf.* Megaw 1976) and the possible plantation of prestigious Irishmen on Manx lands (*cf.* Gelling 1983:259). During the reign of Godred's son Olaf Bitling, this influence will have escalated enormously. The establishment of the diocese of Sodor and Man and of the Manx parish system in particular will have accelerated the institutionalisation of the Gaelic language and associated cultural practises. By the time of MacSorley rule in Islay in the second half of the 12th century and the establishment of a new diocese of Argyll and Islay parish network, it is clear that all important naming developments were taking place in G. While Norse speech may still have been used in diplomatic contexts, this point marks the final demise of Islay's Norse period. Although this makes it substantially shorter than we might expect in the Outer Hebrides, Skye or the Northern Isles, there is no reason why Norse settlement in Islay could not have been just as intense or complete as they are likely to have been in more northerly areas.

9.4 Final thoughts

This project has touched on a number of different academic disciplines. By so doing, it has been possible to test the limits of what the Islay material can and cannot show. The conclusions reached may have involved a certain amount of speculation and are certainly open to debate, but if they have proved anything definitively it is the need for revision of the accepted framework for Norse settlement. Whether the findings of the present place-name survey can be extended to the other islands of the Inner Hebrides remains to be seen. In the meantime, however, it is hoped that they will prompt a thorough re-appraisal of the historical evidence and provide a more fruitful starting point for future linguistic and archaeological investigations in the area.

***c.* 795 – *c.* 825**	Early Norse raids in the West. The proximity of Islay to Iona and Rathlin island raises the possibility that it too may have been targeted. If the strategic value of Islay was not already known to the Norse, it would soon have become clear. There may have been settlement during this period. Even if this was initially on a small scale, it will nevertheless have been on a prestige level. It may also have resulted in the borrowing of certain G place-names into the eventual Norse nomenclature. The ensuing years see the foundation of the mysterious Norse kingdom of Lothlinn (an early incarnation of Man and the Isles?) and the better documented rise of Norse Dublin.
847	Islay likely to have been among the 'islands around Ireland' said by ASB to have been subdued by the Norse. Many of the locals are likely to have been driven away or killed. Full control of the area is also likely to have beckoned the Norse plantation of Islay, a process which will have been more or less complete before the Norse discovery and settlement of Iceland around 870. Complete absence of Norse names containing G *ex nomine* onomastic units suggests that the Norse were the prestige agents in this endeavour and paid little regard to native traditions. It may have been following this period that the possible *þing* or 'assembly' of ['ʃu?nar?tiŋ] was established on Sunderland farm.
***c.* 856-8**	Remaining locals conscripted and sent to Ireland to die as *Gall Gadheil*?
***c.* 870**	Norse settlement of the Scottish Isles complete. Growing centralised power in Norway decides to subordinate the independent Norse polities in the West – a process to be conflated in later, saga accounts with the overseas expedition of Harald Fairhair. It is possible that the Islay's many ON *-staðir* and *-býr* names date to this period. It may also have been around this time that a uniform system of taxation based on the *urisland* was introduced in Orkney, Man and Islay.
976 – *c.* 1000	First reference to the Kingdom of (Man and) the Isles. It was possibly during this period under Manx or Orcadian influence that the proposed Islay *leiðangr* system was established. Several Scandinavian burials in Islay point to a renaissance of Norse prestige culture around this time – perhaps in response to the increasingly Hibernophile and Christian culture of Norse Dublin. It was towards the end of this period that Olaf Trygvasson made Christianity the official, prestige religion of the Norse world. The obvious influence of the Irish Church in this matter would no doubt have led to substantial G cultural inroads in the Inner Hebrides.
1079	Seizure of Man by Godred Crovan. Close family connections with Ireland (Godred's father was Harald the black 'of Ireland') and dealings with Dublin lead to increasing Irish influence in the Isles. Irish capital used to fund settlement expansion/ plantations in Man and Islay?
1095 - 1102	Godred dies in Islay. The resulting power vacuum and general state of cultural flux prompt Magnus Bareleg's expeditions of 1098-1102.
***c.* 1103/14-1154**	Godred's son, Olaf Bitling, reigns in Man. Establishment of the Diocese of Man and the Isles and most probably the Manx parish system. The absence of Kirk-names in Islay may suggest that its parochial system dates to a slightly later period, when the island's language and onomastic traditions were once again completely Gaelic.
1156	Appropriation of Islay and a large part of the Kingdom of Man and the Isles by Somerled mac Gilla-brigte. Lands around the new 'royal' centre of Finlaggan and those of other leading magnates apportioned between prestigious G-speaking incomers resulting in clusters of *baile*-names? New diocese of Argyll established under Somerled's sons *c.* 1183. If it had not already happened under Olaf Bitling, the island's old, Norse *leiðangr* system would have been transformed into a network of parishes and burial districts at this point. Gaelic now firmly established as local prestige and vernacular language alike. Norse retained as a diplomatic language until 1266?

Figure 66: The Norse in Islay – Suggested timeline

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1203 (9 Dec) Constitution by Innocent III (BI:5-8)

*c.*1385 Fordun: *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* ii.x: *De insulis Scociae Divisis ab Insulis Orcadibus* (BI:474)

1408 (6 May) Charter of Donald, Lord of the Isles, to Brian Vicar McKay (BI:16-18/ PRIA 12 Jan 1852 (vol. v. p.230); ALI:21-7)

1494 (14 Jun) Charter by James IV to John Maclan of Ardnamurchan (RMSII:2216; BI:24-26)

1496 (8 Oct) Charter by James IV to Lachlanno Mak-Gilleone (RMSII:2329; BI:26-7)

1499 (29 Mar) Charter by James IV to John Maclan of Ardnamurchan (BI:28-30 only – from the Argyll Charter Chest)

1506 (19 Nov) Charter by James IV to John Maclan of Ardnamurchan (RMSII:3001)

1507 (ND) 'The Maclan Extent' (ERXII:pp.587-590)

1509 (ND) Crown Rental of Islay (ERXIII:pp.219-221; BI:484-5)

1539 (28 July) Gift of James V to Alan Maclean, brother of Hector Maclean of Dowart (RMSIII:2065, pp.463-4)

1540 (9 Jan) Charter of James V to Hector Makclane (RMSIII:2065:)

1541a (5 Jul) Extract from the Rentals of the Lords of the Isles (ERXVII:612-620)

1541b (5 Jul) Extract from the Rentals of the Lords of the Isles (ERXVII:633-642)

1542 (12 Nov) Charter of James V to Hector M'Clane (RMSIII:2835:p.660)

1545 (21 April) Charter of Mary to Jacob M'Connyll (RMSIII:3085:pp.722-3)

1549 Monro's Western Isles of Scotland and Genealogies of the Clans (Munro 2002:55-81)

1550 (23 June) Charter of Mary to Hector Makclane (RMSIV:800:pp.179-180)

1554 (1 April) Charter of Mary confirming 'arrangement' between Nigel M'Neill of Geya and Jacob M'Connell of Dunnavey and Glennis and his spouse Agnes Campbell (RMSIV:921, pp.205-6)

1558 (5 May) Charter of Francis and Mary to Macdonald of Duniveg (RMSIV:1272:pp.284-5)

1562 (24 Sep) Charter of Queen Mary to James Mackonell of Dunnovaig and Glennis (OPSI:274-5; RSS V:1112)

1563 (12 Feb) Charter of Queen Mary to James Mackonell of Dunnovaig and Glennis (RSS V:1259)

1564 (5 May) Charter of Queen Mary to James Mackonell of Dunnovaig and Glennis (RSS V:1879: BI:73)

1588 (19 Mar) Charter of James VI to Hector Makclene (RMSV:1491:pp.509-10)

1599 (11 Mar) Charter of James VI confirming transfer from Angus M'Connyll of Dunnavaig, Lord of Kintyre and Glennis and Archibald M'Connyll (RMSVI:870:pp.282-3)

1584 (14 Jan) Tack to Angus McConnell of Dunavaig by Queen Mary (RSSVIII:1743)

1609 (10 July) Charter of James VI to Fergus M'Baithe: Office of Physician in Chief of the Isles and certain lands in Islay (BI:109; RMSVII:109:pp.41-2)

1612-14 (Oct 1612-Nov 1614) Act for the relief of the King's tenants ...(RPC 1613-16:13-14 Fol. 27, a.)

1614 (21 Nov) Crown Rental of Islay (BI:487-490; RMSVII:1137:pp.417-420 – RMS has two lists; the first with cash and the second with presents)

1615 (1 July) Retour of the Barony of Dowart (Retours I:16)

1617 (11 Mar) Charter of James VI to Roderico M'Kenzie (RMSVII:1628:pp.589-91)

1627 (4 Sep) Charter of James VI to John Campbell of Caddell (RMSVIII:1146:pp.400-1)

1629 (12 Jun) Charter of James VI to Joanni Campbell confirming transfer by Joannis M'Connell of Knokranisale in Ila (RMSVIII:1410:p.447)

1630 (24 Jul) Crown Charter to Lachlano M'Cleane (RMSVIII:1610:pp.536-7)

1631 (ND) Rental of Islay (Cawdor Muniments, bundle 655)

1632 Crown charter to Archibald Lord of Lorne (RMSVIII:1909:pp.650-1)

1654 Blaeu, J. (1654): *Atlas of Scotland.* Amsterdam (http://www.nls.uk/digitallibrary/map/early/blaeu/blaeu_atlas_index.html Accessed 4 August 2004)

1662 (6 Feb) Retour of the Barony of Ilay (Retours I:68)

1662b (6 Feb) Retour of 5 M land in Ilay (Retours I:69)

1665 (28 June) Crown charter to Sir Hugh Campbell of Calder (RMSXI:778:pp.389-92)

1674 (6 May) Retour of the Barony of Dowart (Retours I:93)

1666 (10 Jul) (RMSXI:930:pp.464-7)

1686 *Rentall of Ila: Beltan Sett* (BI:490-520)

1694 Hearth Tax (NAS:E69/3/1)

1695 (9 Dec) Retour of Earldom of Argyll (Retours I:93)

1722 *Rental of the Parishes of the Island* (BI:521-544)

1733 Rent Roll of the Parish(es) of Kildaltan/ Killarow and Kilmenie/ Kilhomen in Isla, Commencing at Whitsunday (DB:9-19)

1741 Rent Roll of the Parish(es) of Kildaltan/ Killarow and Kilmenie/ Kilhowman in Isla, Commencing on Whitsunday (DB:37-44)

1749 *View of the Contents of the Barony and Estate of Islay* (DB:63-67)

M Stephen MacDougall's 1749-51 *Map of the Island of Islay* (BI:552-3)

1801 George Langlands map of Argyllshire (http://www.nls.uk/digitallibrary/map/early/581.html Accessed 4 August 2004)

1832 John Thomson's map of Argyllshire(http://www.nls.uk/digitallibrary/map/early/506.html Accessed 4 August 2004)

Part II: Local Pronunciation: Informants

NAME: GENDER: AGE IN MAY 2004:	LOCAL KNOWLEDGE
Effie Clark (f, 67)	Kilarrow, Kilchoman
Anne MacGill (f, 39)	Kilarrow, Kilmeny, Kilchoman, Kildalton
Mary MacCormick (f, *)	Kilarrow, Kilchoman
Eleanor MacNab (f, 52)	Kilmeny, Kildalton
Lena McKeurtan (f, 85)	Kilmeny
Jock Campbell (m, 68)	Kilmeny, Kilchoman (North)
Annie Campbell (f, 61)	Kilmeny
Neil MacEachern (m, 63)	Kilmeny, Kilchoman (North)
Donald Bell (m, 73)	Kilarrow, Kilmeny
Catriona Bell (f, *)	Kilarrow, Kilmeny
Donald MacFadyen (m, 74)	Kilchoman
Dugan Campbell (m, *)	Kildalton
Hamish McTaggart (m, *)	Kildalton
Margaret McTaggart (f, *)	Kildalton

* Not available

Part III: Abbreviations

Annals and chronicles

AFM	*The Annals of the Four Masters*	CELT (see below)
AI	*The Annals of Innisfallen*	CELT
ALC	*The Annals of Loch Cé*	CELT
ASB	*The Annals of St Bertin*	Nelson, J. (trans. ed.) (1991)
ASC	*The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*	OMACL (see below)
AT	*The Annals of Tigernach*	CELT
AU	*The Annals of Drum Cét*	CELT
CRM	*Chronicles of the Kings of Man and the Isles*	Broderick, G. & Sowell, B. (trans. ed.) (1973)
ESSH	*Early Sources of Scottish History*	Anderson, A.O. (1922)
FA	*Fragmentary Annals*	CELT
SC	*'The Scottish Chronicle'*	Hudson, B.T. (trans. ed.) (1998)

Medieval Scandinavian material

Flóamanna saga	http://www.snerpa.is/net/isl/floam.htm
Haralds saga hárfagra	OMACL
Gulaþing	Larson (trans. & ed.) (1935)
Frostaþing	Hagland, J.R. & Sandnes, J. (eds.) (1994)

Later historical sources

APS	*The Acts of Parliament of Scotland*	Thomson, T. & Innes, C. (eds.) (1814-75)
BC	*The Book of the Thanes of Cawdor*	Innes, C. (ed.) (1859)
BI	*The Book of Islay*	Smith, G.G. (ed.) (1895)
CPL	*Calendar of Papal Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland*	Bliss, W.H & others (eds.) (1893-)
DB	*Day Book of Daniel Campbell of Shawfield*	Ramsay, F. (ed.) (1991)
ER	*The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland*	Stuart, J. & others (eds.) (1878-1908)
MM	*The Mackintosh Muniments*	Paton, H. (ed.) (1903)
MSA	*Minutes of the Synod of Argyll*	MacTavish, D.C. (ed.) (1944)
OPS	*Origines Parochiales Scotiae*	Innes, C. (1854)
Retours	*Inquisitionum ad Capellum Domini Regis Retournatarum quae in Publicis Archivis Scotiae adhus Servantur abbreviato*	Thomson, T. (ed.) (1811-16)
RMS	*Registrum Magni Sigilli Regum Scottorum (Register of the Great Seal)*	Thomson, J.M. & others (eds.) (1882-1914)
RPC	*Register of the Privy Council*	Masson, D. (ed.) (1891)
RSS	*Registrum Secreti Sigilli Regum Scotorum (Register of the Privy Seal)*	Livingstone, M. & others (eds.) (1908-)
SHSM	*Scottish History Society Miscellany*	Edinburgh (1926)

Dictionaries, place-name glossaries and other reference works

CSD	*The Concise Scots Dictionary*	Robinson, M. (ed.) (1985
CVC	*An Icelandic-English Dictionary (2nd Ed.)*	Cleasby, R. *et al.* (1957)
DIL	*Dictionary of the Irish Language*	Quin, E.G. (ed.) (1983)
DNM	*Dictionary of Northern Mythology*	Simek, R. (1996)
Dwelly	*Illustrated Gaelic-English Dictionary*	Dwelly, E. (2001)
Indl	*Introduction to NG*	Rygh (1898)
KLNM	*Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk Middelalder*	Various (1956-78) (see KLNM below)
M	*An Etymological Dictionary of the Irish Language*	MacBain, A.C. (1896)
NG	*Norske Gårdnavne*	DOKPRO
NID	*Norsk-isländska dopnamn*	Lind, H.E. (1905-15)
NR	*Navneregister*	Forsvarets karttjeneste (1990-1991)
NSL	*Norsk Stadnamnleksikon*	Sandnes, J. & Stemshaug, O. (1976)
SNF	*Stednavneforskning I*	Christensen, V. & Kousgård-Sørensen, J. (1972)
Zoëga	*A Concise Dictionary of Old Icelandic*	Zoëga, G.T. (2004)

Institutes and journals

CANMORE	The online database of the RCAHMS (NMRS) http://www.rcahms.ac.uk
RCAHMS	The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SRO	The Scottish Records Office
BAR	*British Archaeological Reports*
JRSAI	*Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*
PRIA	*Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*
PSAS	*Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*
SHR	*Scottish Historical Review*

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APPENDIX I: PLACE-NAME SURVEY

1: KILCHOMAN

Almond [ˈɛːmɔnd̥]

NR 222 554

Ambud (1507) *Annuid* (1509) *Amot* (1541a) *Amott* (1541b) *Amod* (1562) *Amoid* (1563) *Amott* (1614) *Annot [vel Amott]* (1627) *Olmond* (1631) *Amolt* (1662) *Amell* (1665) *Almond* (1686) *Almond* (1722) *Almond* (1733) *Ammond* (1741) *Almond* (M)

Etymology: ON *á(r)mót* (n)

Scrutiny of the early forms suggests ON **Á(r)mót*, 'confluence of rivers' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:77; Gillies 1906:24 & 149) – referring, no doubt, to the confluence of the stream from Gleann Amaind and Abhainn Ardnish. The farm-name 'Åmot' *etc.* can be found in many places in Norway (NSL:357), with more than two dozen simplex examples listed in NG (*cf.* NSL:357).

Associations:

Ambud et Archallauch (1507) *Annuid et Arehalach* (1509)

Context:

The farm-district of Almond, which appears to have been bordered by **Abhainn Ardnish** to the NE (see Nerabus below) and **Gleann Amaind** to the NW, is overlooked by **Cnoc Garbh a'Mhill**; **Beinn Tart a'Mhill**; and **Cnoc a'Mhill** (discussed under Kelsa below).

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Ardnave [ˌard̥ ˈneːv]

NR 283 713

Ardnow (1507) *Ardnow* (1509) *Ardnew* (1588) *How* (1614) *Ardneaw* (1631) *Ardnew* (1686) *Anrdneave* (1722) *Ardnave* (1733) *Ardnave* (1741) *Ardnave* (1749) *Ardneave* (M)

Etymology: G *àird* (f) + (ON *nef* (n))

While Thomas (MS) suggests G **Àrd na Naoimh*, 'promontory of the saints' and Maceacharna (1976:114) 'height of the (heathen) temple or St Nemh', there are reasons to belief this name is a conflation of G *àird* and a pre-existing ON **Nef*, 'promonotory'. See notes on Kilnave below, for a fuller discussion.

Associations:

Ardnow (1507) *Ardnow* (1509) *Ardnew* (1588) *Ardneaw* (1631) *Ardnew* (1686) *Anrdneave, and the island thereof* (1722) *Keandrochead, Mergadill, Ardnave* (1733) *Keandrochead, Ardnave, Breakauchie, Mergidill, Killnave* (1741) *Ardnave & Breakachy* (1749)

Antiquities:

The RCAHMS Inventory (NRMS:NR27SE 20) records a possible **dun** within the bounds of the old holding of Ardnave as illustrated on MacDougall's map.

Context:

The sandy bay of **Tràigh Nòstaig** [ˌtraiː ˈnɔstˌɪgʲ / ˌtraiː ˈnoːstˌɪgʲ] and off-lying island of **Eilean Nòstaig** are both within a kilometre of the likely site of Ardnave. It has been suggested that the *ex nomine* unit **Nostaig* common to both of these names derives from ON **Aust vík* (*sic.*), 'the bay in the east', and was coined by travellers sailing past towards the west (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:79). But this is difficult to reconcile with the User Group theory presented in Chapter 4 or the location of this relatively sheltered bay to W of several important farm-districts. Bearing these factors in mind, a more satisfactory explanation is provided by ON **Naustvík*, 'the bay of the boat-house(s)'. Naustvik *etc.* is common in Norway (NR I:407; NR II; 434; NR III:344), where its use signifies the (one-time) presence of boat-houses (Indl:68; NSL:230). It can also be found in Iceland, where Jónsson (1907-15:511) notes a Naustavík (XVIII) and a Naustvíkr (XIV). Just what kind of boats the structures implied by **Nostaig* in Islay were used to house is open to question. Given the ecclesiastical centre on Eilean Nave, however, it is interesting to speculate that these where somehow connected with church use (*cf.* Rygh's assessment of the farm-name Naustvik in Nordlands amt (NG XVI:42)). If so, the name would point to Norse Christian practice and might be considered relatively late.

The hill of **Slèidmeall** is about 0.8km to the WSW (see notes on Breakachey below)

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Arihalloch [ˌaːri ˈhaʔɬax]

'Arrihalich in rental 1644 payed £96, 6s. 8d. and is a very good possession' (1722)

NR 190 556

Archallauch (1507) *Arehalach* (1509) *Arealaich* (1541a) *Arealaith* (1541b) *Arehallich* (1542) *Arrelaich* (1614) *Archalich* (1615) *Ardalaich [vel Arealaich]* (1627) *Arriballach* (1631) *Ary Sallach* (1654) *Ardalloch* (1662) *Ardalloch* (1665) *Ariehallach* (1686) *Ainhallich* (1722) *Arrihalich* (1722) *Arihaloch* (1733) *Aryhallauch*; *Arieballach* (1741) *Arrihalloch* (1749) *Archalloch* (M)

Etymology: G *àirigh* (f) + (ON loan word *skalli* (m))?

The generic element here is the G appellative *àirigh* (f), 'sheiling'. Although the specific is popularly believed to be G *sallach* (adj.), meaning 'dirty' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:213 & local pronunciation), the close proximity of **Àirigh Sgallaidh** [ˌaːri ˈskʾaʔli], **Tòn Airigh Sgallaidh** [ˈtɔːn ari ˌskʾaʔli] and the now lost **Anscallaige** [ən ˈskʾaʔli] and **Corieskallag** [ˌkʾɔri ˈskʾaʔlahg̊] (see notes on Ballimony below) raises the possibility of common derivation from G *sgallaidh* 'bald place' – referring most likely to the nearby, treeless slopes of Beinn Cladville (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:89). In the case of Arihalloch, which is first recorded as '*Archallauch*' (1507), phomemic deviation in the specific could be explained as a combination of hyper-correction of an assumed prosthetic /s/ (*cf.* Cox 2002:64; Maceacharna 1976:117 FN 17) and aspiration of the resultant initial [g/k] to [x] following insertion into a genitive context (Chapter 6). While G in form and usage, it is also important to note that *sgallaidh* is a borrowing from ON *skalli* 'bald' (Stewart 2004:413) with the addition of the G locative particle */aidh/ /aigh/ /ach/ etc.* (*cf.* Gillies 1906:153; Watson 1904:xxxiv). As a result, the names Àirigh Sgallaidh *etc.* and possibly also Arihalloch, are unlikely to pre-date the Norse *adventus.*

Associations:

Ambud et Archallauch (1507) *Annuid et Arehalach* (1509) *Arehallich et Forland* (1542) *Archalich et Foirland* (1615) *Ardalaich [vel Arealaich]* (1627) *Ariehallach and Erpheill* (1686) *Ballimony & Arrihalloch* (1749)

Antiquities:

None within the bounds of the holding, although the dun at Kelsa is approx. 1km to the NNW (see below).

Context:

The name **Erpheill**, with which Archalloch is listed in 1686, seems likely to be an ON *–fjall* name. This is considered in more detail under Nerabus below

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Ballinaby (Farm Steadings) [ˌbaʔlɪ ˈnaʔb̥i / ˌbaʔlɪʔ ˈñaʔb̥i]

NR 221 670

Ballenabe (1507) *Balenaby* (1509) *Ballenabe* (1541a) *Ballenab* (1541b) *Balnabe/ Ballinabie* (1562) *Ballinabie* (1563) *Ballynaby* (1584) *Ballenabe* (1609) *Ballenabe* (1614) *Ballenab* (1627) *Ballenabe* (1632) *Balnab* (1654) *Bellienab* (1662) *Dellienab* (1665) *Ballanbie* (1686) *Ballenab* (1695) *Ballanabie, Ballinabie* (1722) *Balenabie* (1733) [NOT 1749] *Ballynaby* (M)

Etymology: ON *baile (m)* + *na* (art) + (ON *býr* (m))

Although both Thomas (MS) and Gillies (1906:150) suggest G **Baile n'Aba*, 'the Abbot's townland', this does not accord particularly well with the vowel sound in the final syllable of local pronunciation. Neither are there any records of this site ever having housed or belonged to an abbacy, whether Columban, Roman or otherwise. Given the probable importance of this site to the island's Norse community – as indicated by the grave goods from high-status Viking Age burials (see below) – it is perhaps more realistic to postulate an effectively tautological **Baile na Býr*, literally 'the farm of the (farm)'. The phenomenon whereby formally secondary G place-names have been created by the adaptation of formally primary ON material is relatively common in Islay (see, for example, notes on Glenegedale, Glenastle and Artalla in Kildalton) and appears to indicate a wave of name giving activity during the linguistic cross-over from Norse to Gaelic. In the case of Ballinaby, it is not impossible that the change took place when the lands were granted to the MacBeth family by the Lords of the Isles (see Chapter 7).

A further point of interest here is the postulated ON simplex. Rather than the West Norse **Bœr* which we might have expected of the area's supposedly West Norwegian colonists, we appear to have East Norse**Býr*. This has interesting ramifications for both the geographical origins of the name-giving group and the possible time of coinage (Chapter 7). Dialectal differences in form aside, however, both variants tend to be associated with farms of high rental value and areas of relatively high quality arable land (*cf.* KLNM II:381-9) – such as we find around Ballinaby.

Associations:

Leich et Ballenabe (1507) *Ballenabe, Areset* (1541a) *Ballenab. Areset* (1541b) *Balnabe* (1562) *Ballinabie and Gartnahalla* (1563) *Ballenebie and Gartnahalla* (1584) *Ballenabe, Areset, Howe, Saligo* (1609) *Ballenabe, Arreset* (1614) *Ballenabe, Aresett, How, Saligo* (1632)

Antiquities:

Viking burials:

The remains of at least 4 Viking burials have been recovered from the stabilised sand-dunes in the vicinity of Ballinaby farmhouse:

1: (NMRS:NR26NW 4.01) 2 oval 'tortoise' brooches said to have been found under a large standing stone at Ballinaby.

2: (NMRS:NR26NW 4.02) 2 burials, of a man and a woman, with a selection of grave goods reminiscent of the finds at Kiloran Bay, Colonsay: suggesting 10th century provenance.

3: (NMRS:NR26NW 4.03) a large cist aligned ENE-WNW made from 12 large slabs containing a single (male?) skeleton, along with weapons and other grave goods, which date the burial to 950-1050.

4: (NMRS:NR26NW 4.05) A captain Burgess and crew from the visiting sloop of war *Savage* dug up weapons, which they carried away, and a great many bones.

5: (NMRS:NR26NW22) A sword of the Viking type was illustrated by Pennant when he visited Ballinaby in 1772. It may have been found in the vicinity of the farm.

6: (NMRS:NR26NW 4.0) In 1958, an isolated find of a possible Viking shield-boss was recovered from rocks near the farm.

The location of these burials – on or very near some of the best arable land in the northern half of the Rhinns – their relatively late date; and the fact that they include typical female assemblages all point to established Norse communities with a well defined social hierarchy. That these kinds of diagnostically Norse artefacts were still being deposited in the late 10th century has important implications for our understanding of the nature, extent and longeivity of Norse settlement (see Chapter 3).

Context:

The farm-buildings at Areset (now **Erasaid**) and the nearby ridge of **Druim na h-Erasaid** (see notes on Coulabus in Kilchoman) are located in the far SE of the holding as shown on MacDougall's map of 1749-51 – more than 6km from the current Ballinaby farm-buildings. Considering that both Druim na h-Erasaid and Erasaid are several km to the E of **Sruthan Lag na Criche** and **Lag na Criche** (G 'the stream of the hollow of the border' and 'the hollow of the border' respectively) it seems unlikely that their connection with Ballinaby is ancient. Like the **Pendicle of Ballynaby** (NR 246 645) shown on MacDougall's map, these are likely to reflect the ability of wealthy land-holders in the 17th and 18th centuries to acquire substantial areas of detached pastureland (pendicles) for the summer grazing of sheep and black cattle.

Tràigh Flèisgein Bhèag lies approx.1.2km to the W; **Tràigh Flèisgein Mhòr (Saligo Bay),** *c.* 1.4km to the WSW, adjacent to the farm-buildings at **Saligo**.

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Saligo [ˈs'aʔlɪʔg̊oː]

NR 209 662

Crossbarrich, Salligo, Brakilkerane (1507) *Crossberrich Salego et Bray Kilkerane* (1509) *Saligo* (1541a) *Saligo* (1541b) *Halleger (or Sellego)* 1562 *Sellego* (1563) *Saligo* (1614) *Saligo* (1627) *Saligo* (1662) *Salligo* (1665) *Saligo* (1695)

ON (uncertain) + *gjá* (f)

Given the very prominent 'creek', through which **Saligo River** flows into the sea *c.*100m from the Saligo farm-buildings and the large breeding populations of Grey and Common seals which still abound in this area, it might seem reasonable to assume derivation from ON **Selagjá*, 'Seal Creek' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:78). As Macheacharna (*loc. cit.*) points out, however, the [a] in the first syllable of the spoken forms of this name (/a/ in the written forms) is not consistent with the [ɛ] we might expect from an earlier ON *sela*.

Assuming that there have been no radical changes in the quality of this vowel over the centuries, it is not impossible that the name as a whole derives from ON **Sælugjá*, 'bay of happiness'. As early as the 1790s, it was observed that the W coast of the Rhinns is generally 'rough and bold [and] afford[s] no anchoring ground' (Sinclair 1983:386). Considering the extensive stretches of rocks and cliffs on either side of the open but accessible Saligo Bay, it is not implausible that the 'happiness' expressed in this name represents the joy felt by desperate sailors after landing here during a storm.[215] As there are no close cognates for this compound, however, it must be considered speculative at best and the specific element of the name uncertain.

The former Norse character of this area is further demonstrated by the name **Bun an Osa**, which signifies the estuary where the Saligo river leaves Loch Gorm *c.* 1km to the ESE. While the construction of this name is clearly G, it appears to be based on an earlier ON **Óss*, 'river mouth' (*cf.* NSL:244; Indl:69) or possibly the river-name *Ósi* in the oblique form *Ósa*, the 'Ouse' (*cf.* NSL:244 'Osa').

[215] See notes on Solum in Kildalton for a further potential example of this kind of 'laudatory' name.

The names of the nearby beaches **Tràigh Flèisgein Mhòr** and **Bhèag** are also G constructs. Given the obscurity of the final onomastic unit **Flèisgein*, however, it seems likely that these too derive from a Norse original (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:124). Considering the large expanse of low-lying rocks which frame both bays, this may well be ON **Flesjarnar* or some other definite pl. of ON *fles* (f). In Norwegian place-names, ON *fles* is normally applied to skerries lying at the edge of the water (Indl:50). This can be compared with the Shetlandic de Fles, de Fles, Fles point and de Flesjins, which Jakobsen (1936:42) derives from different inflections of ON **Fles*, meaning a flat skerry in the sea or flat, low-lying rocks at the sea side.

Figure 67: Tràigh Flèisgein Bheag from the N

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Ballimony [ˌb̥a.lɪʔ ˈvɔʔñɪ / ˌb̥a.lɪʔ ˈmɔʔni]

NR 195 550

[*Ballydale* (1507) *Balledale* (1509) *Ballegawle* (1541a) *Ballegowle* (1541b) *Ballygallie* (1562) *Balligally* (1563) *Ballegevie* (1584) *Ballegaull* (1614) *Ballegoule* (1627) *Balledalie* (1631) *Belliegoule* (1662) *Belliegowrie* (1665) *Balladalie* (1686) *Balliegallie* (1722) *Balygalie* (1733) *Balygawly* (1741)] *Ballimony* (1749) *Ballymeny* (M)

Etymology: G *baile (m)* + *monaidh* (m)

The generic here is G *baile*. While Thomas' (MS) offering of G **Baile a Mhanaich*, 'the Monk's townland', fits reasonably well with the spelling shown on MacDougall's map, there is no chapel in the vicinity and no reason to believe the settlement was ever assoiated with religious activity. Gillies' (1906:150) suggestion of G **Bail' a'mhonaidh*, 'the boggy townland', on the other hand, is not only a better reflection of the earliest certain written form, *Ballimony* (1749), but clearly descriptive of the local landscape – which is dominated by peat bogs (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:109; DIP:8). It should be noted, however, that the Ballimony has only appeared in the documentary record since the 1740s.

Prior to 1749, the name of the farm-district in this area appears to have alternated between *Balledale* and *Balygawly*.[216] But rather than indicating multiple estate centres, the transition from medial /d/ to /g/ and back can be explained in terms of the G grammar system (Chapter 6). Both variants can be explained as G **Baile Ui Dalaighe*, 'O'Daly's townland' (Maceacharna 1976:109), for which there are numerous cognates in Ireland (*cf.* Joyce 1920:80).

Associations:

Ballimony & Arrihalloch (1749)

Context:

Àirigh Sgallaidh, presumably related to the *Corieskallag* and *Anscallaige* with which this farm-district is listed in 1686 and 1722 is situated approx. 2km to the WNW. It is adjacent to ***Tòn Airigh Sgallaidh*** (see notes on Arihalloch above).

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Breakachey [ˈbruixk ˌaxɯɣ]

NR 275 725

Brekauch (1507) *Brekauch* (1509) *Brecacha* (1631) *Breckahil* (1654) *Brekacha/ Breckcacha* (1686) *Breckcacha* (1686) *Breackachie* (1722) *Breakachie* (1722) *Brecachie* (1733) *Mergidill* (1741) *Breakachy* (1749) *Breakachey* (M)

Etymology: G *breac* (adj) + *achadh* (m)

'Speckled field' (Maceacharna 1976:107).

Associations:

Brecacha, ??zow, Kineaw, Garrviez Mc?uri?th (1631) *Myln of Breckcacha* (1686) *Mylne of Breakachie* (1722) *Mergadill, Brecachie* (1733) *Keandrochead, Ardnave, Breakauchie, Mergidill, Killnave* (1741) *Ardnave & Breakachy* (1749)

Antiquities:

The **crannog** in Ardnave Loch lies approx. 400m to the S of Ardnave (=Breakachey) farm buildings (RCAHMS 1984:153).

[216] *Ballydale* (1507) *Balledale* (1509) *Ballegawle* (1541a) *Ballegowle* (1541b) *Ballygallie* (1562) *Balligally* (1563) *Ballegaull* (1614) *Ballegoule* (1627) *Balledalie* (1631) *Belliegoule* (1662) *Glenfansay, Allisteretroch, Illestickareauch, Belliegowrie and Ochtofad* (1665) *Elistereyrarach, Illandowrrsay, Balladalie, Corieskallag* (1686) *Elister Wester, Balliegallie and Anscallaige* (1722) *Balygalie* (1733) *Wester Elister, Balygawly, Archally and Island Oversaw, Easter Elister* (1741)

Context:

The bay of **Tràigh Nòstaig** and the off-lying island of **Eilean Nòstaig**, approx. 1.85km to the NNW seems to offer the best landing place in the vicinity (see notes on Kilnave below). The lochs **Laingeadail** and **Laingeadail Beag** and the stream **Casach Loch Laingedail** lie in the S part of Breakachey, appear to be derived from an earlier ON **Langadalr*, 'Longdale' (see notes on Kilnave below).

The smooth, rock-free summit of nearby **Slèidmeall** ['slaiʤ̥.mɛl] (51m) appears to be derived from ON **Sléttafjall* or **Sléttavöllr*, 'smooth mountain or field' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:79; NSL:28). While it is difficult to tell from the local pronunciation or topography which generic was used here, it is probably worth noting that although Slettvollen *etc.* is not unknown in Norway (NRI:532; NRII:573-4; NRIII: 468-9), the mountain-name Slettfjellet *etc.* is relatively common (NRI:531-2; NRII:573-4; NRIII:468-9).

The boggy environs of **Mùirnemeall** (55m) and **Mùirnemeall Beag** (56m) [ˌmuːr.nəmial ˈb̥ihkʲ] appear to take their name from ON **Mýrnavöllr* 'boggy field, plain' or perhaps ON **Mýrnafjall* 'boggy hill'. Jónsson (1907-15:417) lists a Murnavöllr in Iceland (VI).

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Carn ['kaːrn]

'Carneglassans a compact little tenement' (1722)

NR 245 572

Carnglas (1507) *Carne* (1541a) *Carne* (1541b) *Carne Glassance* (1563) *Carneglassance* (1584) *Carn* (1614) *Carne* (1627) *Carmglassoir* (1631) *Carne* (1662) *Cairne* (1665) *Carnglassans* (1686) *Carneglassans* (1722) *Carnglassans* (1733) *Carnglassansy* (1741) *Carn* (1749) *Carne* (M)

Etymology: G *càrn* (m)

From G **An Càrn*, 'the cairn' (Maceacharna 1976:115). RCAHMS (1984:53) note a cairn on the eastern slope of Cnoc a Chuirn, approx 700m to the SW.

Associations:

Gartker et Carnglas (1507) *Glassame, Carmglassoir, Nearbols* (1631) *Cairne and Areseid* (1665)

Antiquities:

The remains of the **chapel** and burial ground known as **Cilleach Mhicheil** are shown approx 0.65km to the SW of the Carn farm buildings on modern OS maps. While it is difficult to say whether these ruins fell within the bounds of Carn or those of Torronich some 650m further to the SW, their location on the

eastern slope of Cnoc a'Chuirn (80m) is probably significant in this respect. As this hill shares part of its name with Carn, it seems likely that the farm, the hill and the chapel on it were all contained within the same parcel of land.

The chapel itself is 'small building of round-angled subrectangular plan' measuring *c.* 8.25m E-W by 4.75m N-S, with walls approx 1.25m thick on average (NMRS:NR25NW 2). According to the RCAHMS, it is 'adjoined on the S by the remains of a depopulated settlement called "Cill Michael"'. It should be noted, however, that the name of this settlement does not appear in any of the early (pre 1749) rentals.

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Cladville [ˈklaːd̥ʒ[ə]ˌviʎə] or [ˈg̊laːd̥ʒəˌvil]

NR 178 541

Gladepen (1507) *Cladpele* (1509) *Cladefill* (1541a) *Cladefil* (1541b) *Gladilfoill (or Cladefield)* (1562) *Cladefeild* (1563) *Cledafeild* (1584) *Cladefill* (1614) *Cladefill* (1627) *adeveill* (*sic.*) (1631) *Kladiuel* (1654) *Cladefill* (1662) *Cladfill* (1665) *Cladavell* (1686) *Cladeveill* (1722) [NOT 1749] *Gladivoll* (M)

Etymology: ON *glaðr* (adj) + *fjall* (n)

While Thomas (MS) saw the generic here as ON *fjall*, 'hill', he argued that the specific should be seen as G *cladach*, 'shore' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:151), which he linked to the Cladrois of the *Senchus* (Chapter 8). According to Thomas' surprisingly circular logic, the specifying agent had to be G because the ON word for 'shore' would be *eyri*! This 'shore' hypothesis has more recently been supported by Maceacharna (1970:30) with reference to the nearby but now lost holding of *Octocladsel*. Far from strengthening Thomas' argument, however, all this proves is that a smaller-farm district with an extent of one auchtenpart was divided off from or, conversely, attached to an important land-holding known as **Cladsel* (*recte* **Cladfel*) = Cladville.

Notwithstanding any potential adaptation of an ancient, G (district-)name, the Norse form of this farm-name has clearly been coined in reference to the nearby hill of **Ben Cladville** (130m). Given the vast majority of the pre-19th century written forms and the hill's unobstructed sea-views to the W and S, it seems likely that the ON form would have been **Glaðafjall*, 'sunny hill' (NB: the photograph in Figure 71 below, was taken from the summit of Ben Cladville).According to Rygh (NG 12:211) the element *glaðr* is common in Norwegian hill-names – such as Glaberg, Gladhaug, Gladhollen *etc.* – where it can usually be interpreted as *sol-glad*, *ie.* 'sunny/ exposed to the sun'.

Associations:

Ochtomoir, Elistra, adeveill (sic.) (1631) *Coull, Sinderline, Forland, Machirvealin and Cladavell* (1686) *Shinderline, Cuill, Masherrveolin, and Foreland, and Cladeveill* (1722)

Antiquities:

The **dun** of **Port Fròige** [ˌpɔrt ˈfrɔːɛɠʲ] lies *c.* 900m to the NW of the farm buildings (NRMS:NR15SE 6)

Context:

Airigh Sgallaidh and **Tòn Airigh Sgallaidh** are both approx. 1km to the NNW (see notes on Arihalloch above)

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Conisby [ˈkɔ.ñɪ.spi]

'Connisbie a large good quarter land, very good for stock and also for sowing' (1722)

NR 262 618

Conasbe (1507) *Conasbe* (1509) *Conispy* (1541a) *Conispy* (1541b) *Quennesby* (1562) *Quennisbee* (1563) *Connesbie* (1584) *Conispy* (1614) *Conipsay [vel Conipspay]* (1627) *Conasbie* (1631) *Coñespy* (1654) *Conesbie* (1686) *Connisbie* (1722) *Koningsby* (1733) *Koningsbay* (1741) *Consiby* (1749) *Conisby* (M)

Etymology: ON *konungr* (m) + *býr* (m)

ON **Konungsbýr* 'king's farm' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:77). Derivation from a prestigious *býr* compound (*cf.* Balllinaby above) is supported by the high 'Relative Size' and 'Land Quality' of this farm-district (Appendix II). Whether Consiby was ever owned by a king is not recorded. In local tradition, however, it is associated with Godred Crovan, progenator of the later Manx kings of the Isles, who died in Islay in 1095 (CRM§23; Maceacharna 1977:90 FN 12; Earl ND:18).

While there do not appear to be any direct cognates for this compound in Norway or the Norse 'colonies', several cognates are known from other parts of the Scandinavian expansion zone – including a Coningsby near Boston in Lincolnshire. Both the individual elements and the type of construct are common throughout (*cf.* NSL:188). Jakobsen (1936:94 & 33), for example, records a Konister and de Konisbødis in Shetland, which he derives from ON **Koningssætr* and **Konungsbæti* respectively.

Associations:

Conasbie and Kantray[217] (1631) *Conesbie and Keantra* (1686)

[217] *Cantra* (1507) *Kintraw* (1541a) *Kintraw* (1541b) *Kentra* (1562) *Kintraw* (1614) *Kintraw* (1627) *Conesbie* and *Keantra* (1686)

Antiquities:

The **chapel** of **Eaglais Uillean (or Cill Uillean)**, measuring *c.* 6.2m by 4.5m with walls *c.* 1m thick, is situated within a square burial ground approx. 550m to the SE at Bruichladdich (NRMS:NR26SE 1).

The **dun** of **Creag An Fhithich** lies *c.* 1.2km to the NW (NRMS:NR26SE 13).

The beach at Tràigh an Luig (G the strand of the hollow) falls within the bounds of Conisby as shown on MacDougall's map. According to Pennant (1998:209), this was where the 'great MacDonald' had his harbour. While no traces of this structure remain, Pennant (1998:209) surmises that it once had 'piers with doors to secure [...] shipping; a great iron hook, one of the hinges, having lately been found there'. Interestingly, MacDougall labels the area **Conisby Bay** on his map. Whether this is a reflection of established local usage or MacDougall's lack of familiarity with the area is impossible to say. In either case, the association confirms the prestigious place of Conisby in the local socio-economic landscape.

Context:

The specific element in **Carn Olla**, *c.* 500m to the N of the farm buildings at Conisby, is derived ultimately from the ON male personal-name Óláfr, Óli *etc.* While its presence in this particular coinage probably should be seen as borrowing into Gaelic, it is highly unlikely to pre-date the Viking Age. **Cnoc Allanta**, approx. 1.15km to the SSW and **Cnoc a'Cùil**, approx. 1.5km to the SSW are once again formally secondary G names based on pre-existing ON place-name material (see notes on Coultorsay below). Although the name of the nearby hillside of **Am Meall** [əʔˈmĩial] appears to be a fairly common G noun *meall* (m), meaning 'lump, hill', the high number of ON names in the area raises the possibility that it might in fact derive from ON **Fjall*, 'hill'.

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Corsapol [ˈkɔrsəˌpɪl]

NR 299 665

Corspellan (1499) *Corspallane* (1507) *Corspallan* (1509) *Crosebell* (1541a) *Crosebel* (1541b) *Corspellane* (1542) *Crosebell* (1614) *Corspellan* (1615) *Corspellane* (1617) *Cros[se]boll* (1627) *Corspallan* (1631) *Korspelii* (1654) *Corpolang* (1662) *Crossobell* (1665) *Corspallane* (1686) *Corspallan* (1686) *Caspellen; Cospellen* (1722) *Cor(s)apoll* (1749) *Corsapoll* (M)

Etymology: ON *kross* (m) + *pollr* (m)

Contrary to the proclamations of Thomas (MS) and Maceacharna (1976:85), this is not another ON *bólstaðr* name. The written forms are consistently different from every other known and suspected *bólstaðr* name in Islay. Gammeltoft's (2001:304-5) offering of ON *–ból* is more likely, especially given

the Norwegian cognates of Krossbøl and Klosbøle listed in NG.[218] There is, however, an easier alternative.

Judging by the early forms, Corsapol consists of the elements 'cros' and 'poll'. Given that both *crois* (f) and *poll* (m) are attested G nouns and that the terminal cluster /an(e)/ found in most of the source forms is reminiscent of the G diminutive particle *an*, it might seem that there derivation was from G **Croispollan*, 'the little pool of/by the cross'. But as both of these elements also appear in ON, their order in this particular name follows the standard ON pattern of specific–generic and the stress is quite clearly on the specific element, it is probably safer to asume that we are dealing with an ON name.

Before the low-lying alluvial plain on which Corsapol lies was fully drained in the 19th century, the area was dominated by marshland – an environment that would certainly account for the common ON generic *pollr* (*cf.* NSL:247). What a specific of 'cross' might have signified, however, is not entirely clear. Maceacharna (1976:85) was convinced that it was a reference to a Christian Cross. He drew attention in this respect to the place-name **Crois Mhór** attached to a small promontory on the east bank of Loch Gruinart *c.* 3.6km to the north (*cf.* also the nearby **Cnuic na Croise**). While there is no longer any trace of a cross at this site (NRMS:NR27SE 40), Maceacharna (*loc. cit.*) explains this absence as the result of its removal by the Campbells of Argyl, to serve as the mercat cross of the newly formed burgh of Campbeltown. He also sees this as evidence that the originators of this Corsapol were Norse Christians, which in his estimation dates it, along with Persabus in Kilmeny parish, to the beginning of the 11th century. Considering that both of these names are more than 3km from the current farm-buildings at Corsapool, however, it seems unlikely that they are directly connected. In fact, as the old farm-district of Corsapol, lies at the junction of two major overland transit routes – that linking the NW coast of Kilmeny with Lochindaal and Kilarrow and another linking Kilarrow and Lochindaal with Gruinart and the N of Kilchoman parish – it is probably more likely that 'kors' in this case signifies a cross-roads (*cf.* NSL:191; Rygh Indl:62).

It should be noted that all recorded forms of this name place the /o/ in the intial syllable before the /r/. While this could be the result of metathesis in the Norse or post-Norse periods, it might also suggest that the name was created by speakers of an East Norse dialect (see discussion of *býr* names in Chapter 7).

Associations:

Corspellan, Keirbous (1499) *Corspallan, Croismoir, Kilenalzean and Altgaristill* (1631) *Leack, Sannagbeg, Keanchyllane in Machoroshinis, Grunard, and Corspallane* (1686) *Leack, Sannaigbeg, Grannard, and Caspellen; Cospellen* (1722)

[218] in Akershus and Kristians amt resp.

Antiquities:

The **chapel** of **Cill Eileagain** at Craigens, measuring *c.* 8.4m E-W by 5.8m is approx. 350m to the N (NRMS:NR26NE 2). The location of this chapel, off-centre in a sub-oval enclosure *c.* 20m N-S by c16m E-W, point to monastic origins and suggest it may be of some antiquity.

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Coulabus [ˈkuːlaˌb̥ɯs]

'Culabols, a good possession for stock and sowing' (1722)

NR 298 658

Cullipollis (1507) *Cowrepollis* (1509) *Cullabols* (1631) *Culabollis* (1686) *Culabols* (1722) *Culabolls* (1741) *Coulabus* (1749) *Culabus* (M)

Etymology: ON *kúla* (f) + *bólstaðr* (m)

Although easily recognisable as one of Islay's many ON *–bólstaðr* names, there has once again been some debate about the derivation of the specific. With the benefit of early written forms and local pronunciation, however, it seems unlikely, as Gammeltoft (2001:109) suggests, that Coulabus is the same place referred to by the **Collapus* contained in the name Dùn Chollapus in Kilmeny parish. The two are seperated by more than 6.25km, a range of hills and the quality of the vowel in the first syllable (*cf.* notes on Duisker in Kilmeny). With this being the case, it seems more likely that Coulabus in Kilchoman is derived from ON **Kúlabólstaðr*, 'hilly farm' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:85 & 90 FN 14) with specific reference to the series of small hillocks at the eastern end of the holding.

Associations:

Lirepollis et Cullipollis (1507) *Kirepollis et Cowrepollis* (1509) *Cullabols and Lerebols* (1631)

Context:

The farm-buildings of **Erasaid** are aprox. 700m to the SW.

Erasaid

NR 294 652

Areset (1541a) *Areset* (1541b) *Herrestuid* (1562) *Areset* (1609) *Arreset* (1614) *Arresett* (1627) *Aresett* (1632)

Etymology: ON *Ari* (m) + *setr* (m)

The adjoining farm of **Erasaid** (and the ridge of **Druim na h-Erasaid**, some 1500m to the W) are not identified on MacDougall's map. The area to which they belong, however, is shown to be part of the expansive holding centred on the distant farm of Balinaby with which Erasaid is associated in the early rentals.[219] Considering the economic heritage of this site, derivation seems likely to be from ON **Arasætr*, 'Ari's shieling' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:239) or possibly **Arnasætr*, 'Arni's shieling' (see Chapter 7). The man's names Ari and Arni are not uncommon in Norwegian place-names, with a search on NG returning 32 hits for 'Ari' and a further 68 for 'Arni'. Possible cognates for Erasaid in Islay are provided by Arset in Romsdals amt (NG), which is thought to derive from ON **Arasetr* and Arnset in Hedemarkens amt, thought to derive from ON **Arnasetr.*

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Coull ['ku:ɬ]

NR 200 646

Coule (1541a) *Coule* (1541b) *Cowl* (1542) *Coull* (1654) *Cowle* (1665) *Coull* (1614) *Coull* (1615) *Coull* (1617) *Kowle* (1631) *Croll* (1662) *Coull* (1686) *Cuill* (1722) [NOT 1749] *Coole* (M)

Etymology: ON *kúla* (f)

In earlier times, Islay was erroneously believed to be the furthest west of all the islands of Britain (*cf.* Martin 2002:275). On his visit to the island in the 1690s, the traveller Martin Martin was told by locals that the 'village' of Cul on the west coast was so called by ancients because it represented the 'back [part] of the world' (Martin 2002:275-6). Considering the very conspicuous, rounded hill of **Cnoc Mór** (82m), approx. 300m to the NW of the farm buildings, however, it seems more likely that the name is from ON **Kúla*, '(nob-like) hill' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:78). NG records Norwegian examples of 'Kula', 'Kulen' *etc.* in Bratsberg amt, Nordre Bergenhus amt and Smaalenenes amt. According to Jakobsen (1936:74) ON *kúla* is also used in Shetland place-names to denote a rounded hill, as it is in Orkney (see Marwick 1952:171 but *cf.* Matras 1933:188; see also notes on Coulabus, above).

Associations:

Synnarland. Coule. Meanland (1541a) *Synnerland, Coule, Meanland* (1541b) *Synnarland, Coull, Meanland* (1614) *Kowle, Sunarlin, Foirland & ye Lowerheis of Ruachrmanlin* (1631) *Sumerland and*

[219] While Maceacharna (1976:77) suggests derivation from ON **Eiríkssetr*, 'Eirik's steading', this is supported by neither the early forms nor local pronunciation, all of which lack a suitable medial stop. Although there appears to be a medial /t/ in the 1562 form, which could potentiall stand in place of /k/, it is clear that the compiler of RSS has had problems with the handwriting in this document. Given that Coultoon is listed as Culcwyne (Cultoon in 1541), Saligo as Halleger (Saligo in 1541) *etc.*, it is not unlikely that similar problems were encountered with Herrestuid. I would argue that the /st/ in this name is a mis-reading of /ss/. This would give a revised *Herressuid. As the initial /H/ in *Herresuid can easily be dismissed as a reflex of G grammar - probably left behind following the clumsy removal of the name from a definite cotext - it seems that *Erresuid stands in place of Erasaid.

Cowle (1665) *Coull, Sinderline, Forland, Machirvealin and Cladavell* (1686) *Shinderline, Cuill, Masherrveolin, and Foreland, and Cladeveill* (1722)

Antiquities:

The **promontory fort** of **Am Burg** lies approx. 850m to the WNW (NRMS:NR16SE 1) and is clearly linked to the nearby topographical names **Geodh a'Bhuirg** [ˌʤɔʔɔ. əˈvuɪrɣ̊ / ˌʤɔʔɔ. əˈvuːrɪɤ] and **Reidh a'Bhuirg**. All of these names are derived ultimately from ON *borg*, 'rocky place, fort', a word which is commonly associated with Iron-Age fortifications in the Scottish Islands (*cf.* Thomas 1881-2:257).[220] The incidence of ON *borg* in Islay place-names is discussed in more depth in Chapter 8.

Context:

Eilean an Tannais-sgeir lies just off the coast about 1km to the SW. While the /sgeir/ element of this name could be a G borrowing from ON (*cf.* Stewart 2004:413), the effective tautology of *eilean* and *Tannais-sgeir* coupled with the specific-generic word order and apparent ON medial genitive /s/ point more clearly to Norse origins – most probably ON **Há(va)nes(s)sker*, 'High-ness Skerry' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:78). This can be compared with the numerous 'Hånes'es in Norway (NR I:259; NR II:268; but not NR III). While such an interpretation might seem unlikely when the highest point within a kilometre of this stretch of coast is **Carn Mór** at 56m, the nearby name of **Rubha na h-Airde Mòire** may in fact confirm the existence of this (G) 'Headland of the great Height'.

The nearby skerry-name of **Eilean na sgioba** is G, although once again, the likely inclusion of the ON loanword *skip* (n), 'ship' (*cf.* Stewart 2004:13), shows that it will not pre-date the Viking Age. It is possible, however, that the terminal onomastic unit */sgioba/* reflects an earlier ON **Skipey*, 'ship island'. The designation 'Skipøya' *etc.* is used of several islets in N Norway (NRIII:454).

The knoll of **Campa** [ˈkam.pə̥] which lies on the coast *c.* 1.6km to the N, seems likely to be derive its name from ON **Kambr*, 'comb', referring no doubt to the profile of the knoll (*cf.* NSL:180; Jakobsen 1936:64; Matras 1933:166; Jónsson 1907-15:544).

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[220] Thomas (MS) describes these structures as 'Pictish towers'.

Coultoon [ˌkʌɬ ˈd̥uːñə̆]

'Cuiltuine a good wadset' (1722)

NR 200 572

Cultoun (1507) *Cowltoune* (1509) *Cultoun* (1541a) *Cultoun* (1541b) *Culcwyne (or Cultquhen)* (1562) *Cultquhen* (1563) *Colcum* (1584) *Cultoune* (1614) *Cultoun* (1627) *Cultun* (1631) *Cultoun* (1662) *Cultonnie* (1665) *Coultowne* (1686) *Cuiltuine* (1722) *Cultoun* (1733) *Coultown* (1741) *Coulstoon* (1749) *Cultuin* (M)

Etymology: ON *kúla* (f) + *tún* (n)

Although Gillies (1906:151) suggests G **Cùil-tuinidhe*, a 'cave-dwelling', on the basis of the common Argyll G verb *a'tuineadh* 'living' or 'dwelling', there are no conspicuous caves in the vicinity of this holding. Given the location of the modern-day farm-centre on the W slopes of the imposing, knob-like hill of Cnoc Mòr (*c.* 160m), it seems more likely that the specific here is ON *kúla* (*cf.* NSL:192; see also Coull above, Coultorsay below). While there are no exact cognates for the compound **Kúltún*, a search for 'kúl%' on NG returned 50 hits and '%tún' 61 hits – including a *Bertun* from ON **Bergtún* 'mountain-townland' and a Bakketun from ON **Bakkatún* 'Hill-townland' – both in Søndre Trondhjems amt. According to Rygh (Indl:82), ON *tún* is common in the names of the individual *bruk* 'cultivated centres' on large farms/ estates in Norway. This might suggest that Coultoon in Islay began life as a subordinate settlement within the bounds of another farm-district before rising to the status of farm-district itself.

Associations:

Cultoun et Calmazary (1507) *Cowltoune et Calmaser* (1509) *Cultonnie and Clamisfarrie* (1665) *Coultowne and Calmasarie* (1686) *Cultoun and Calumsary* (1733) *Coultown, Calmusary* (1741)

Antiquities:

There is a **dun** approx. 1.2km to the ENE, near the border of Cultuin and Olista (NRMS:NR25NW 38) guarding a three way pass through the hills which joins the SE coast of the Rhinns with Cultuin and Olista.

Context:

The name **Calumsary** [ˈkaɬʌms.ɛri] is linked with Cultuin until 1733, when it disappears from the rentals. If the meaning of 'Callum's sheilling' is accepted, both the generic and the specific could in theory come form either Gaelic or Norse. In this case, however, the specific-generic order of the elements and the presence of what appears to be a medial, ON genitive /s/ points to derivation from ON **Calumsærgi*. This might suggest coinage during a period when the island's Norse speaking community had begun to adopt certain cultural traits from the surrounding Gaelic world (*cf.* discussion in Chapter 7).

The farm buildings at **Fornisaig** lie approx. 1km to the N (see notes on Tormisdale below); and the hills of **Cnoc Garbh a'Mhill**; **Beinn Tart a'Mhill**; and **Cnoc a'Mhill** are nearby (see notes on Kelsay below).

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Coultorsay [ˌkuːl ˈtʼoːr.sʼa]

NR 258 604

Cultorsay (1541a) *Cultorsay* (1541b) *Cultorsay* (1562) *Coultoirsay* (1563) *Culcoirsay* (1584) *Cultorsay* (1614) *Cultorsay* (1627) *Cultorsa* (1631) *Cultorsa* (1654) *Cultorsay* (1662) *Cultersay* (1665) *Cultorsay* (1686) *Cultorsa* (1722) *Coultersay* (1741) *Cultorsa* (1749) *Cultorsa* (M)

Etymology: ON *kúla* (f) + (ON *Þorir* (m) + *staðir* (m pl))

The key to the etymology of this name lies in the relationship between its first syllable and the rest of the construct. Although Thomas (MS), for example, interprets them together as a somewhat fanciful ON **Kuldasetr*, 'Chilly steading', the connection of this holding with Lorgba in the early rentals (not shown on MacDougall's map) provides a better solution.

As can be seen from the 'associations' section below, Coultorsay is linked with Lorgba from 1662 – 1741. In 1507 and 1509, however, the farm linked with Lorgba is not Cultorsa but a 'Coule'. As several other farm-districts in the Rhinns appear to take their names from two adjacent holdings, such as Carnglassans, Leekgruinart *etc.*, it seems likely that the name Cultorsa reflects two separate holdings – a *Cul and a *Torsa – or two different names for the same holding which have since been conflated. Unfortunately, both 'parent-names' are now lost.

While it is often assumed that the first element here is G *cuil*, meaning 'the back or rear of something' (*cf.* Olsen 1983:151 & 153), this is hardly descriptive of a farm-district which occupies the open slope between Cnoc a'Chùil and the sea. Indeed, the presence of **Cnoc a' Chùil** [ˌkrɔːk əˈxuːl] (62m) *c.* 300m to the E suggests origins in ON **Kúla*, 'knob-like hill' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:77 & 90 FN 14; see also notes on Coulabus above).

The second part of Coultorsay has previously been explained as ON **Thors-ey*, 'Thor's island' (Gillies 1906:151). But given the conspicuous lack of islands anywhere in the vicinity, whether literal or otherwise, it seems more likely that the name is ON **Þórisstaðir*, 'Þórir's steading' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:77 & 90 FN 14). Such an interpretation finds support in two independent sources: first, the hill name **Cnoc Thornisaig** [ˌkrɔːxk ˈ[h]ɔrnɪ.siɠʲ] (125m) *c.* 3.35km to the W of the current farm-centre on Coultorsay, which appears to derive from the addition of G *cnoc* 'hill' to a pre-existing ON **Þórisstaðir*;

second, the now lost farm district of *Tochtomoremissay* associated with the neighbouring farm-district of Octomore in 1541 and 1614. Considering the location of Cnoc Thornisaig *c.* 2km inland from Octomore, it must be assumed that the implied farm of *Thornisaig, had come to be a part or 'pendicle' of Octomore. The pronunciation of *Thornisaig, is consistent with the /missay/ part of Tochtomoremissay.

Associations:

Lorgba et Coule (1507) *Largba et Coule* (1509) *How, Lergiebeg and Cultersay* (1665) *Ochtomoir, Cultorsay, Lorgba, Grymsay, Gylin and Dowdilmore* (1686) *Octamore, Cultorsa, Lorgba, Grimsa, Dudilmore, and Gaylin* (1722) *Octomore, Grimsey, Coultersay & Lergba, Dudellmoir, Gylyne, Changehouse, malt-kilne, and Miln of Skibo* (1741)

Context:

Cnoc Allanta to the NW of the farm buildings at Cultorṣa may disguise an earlier, Norse name. Orthographically, the onomastic unit of **Allanta* has clear similarities with Almond – which was inrepreted above as ON **Á(r)mót*, 'confluence of rivers' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:82& 89; Gillies 1906:154). There are, however, currently no significant watercourses in the immediate vicinity of Cnoc Allanta. Given the raised elevation of this site, therefore, derivation from ON **Há(va)land* 'High land/farm', seems more appropriate (see notes on Kildalton in Kildalton and Tallant in Kilarrow).

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Craigfad [ˌkreːhg̊ ˈfaːʔd̥ə]

'Craigfad a good tenement' (1722)

NR 229 558

Cragford (1686) *Craigfade* (1722) *Craigfad* (1733) *Craigfad* (1741) *Craigfad* (1749) *Craigfad* (M)

Etymology: G *creag* (f) + *fada* (adj)

G **Creag fadha*, 'long rock or cliff'. The name of the farm is apparently derived from the natural feature of similar description *c.* 500m to the W (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:116; Thomas MS).

Antiquities:

The ruins of a former 'Catholic **burial place**' known locally as 'Caibeal' (chapel), were levelled about 1975. Although some graves were found at the time, nothing now remains (NMRS:NR25NW 21).

Context:

Ardnish, Abhainn Ardnish, Rubha Neasgaid & Port an Eas all lie approx. 1.15km to the SW. **Bolsa** is *c.* 1.3km to the NNW (see notes on Nerabus below).

*Ellister

Ilastill (1507) *Ylistil* (1509) *Aelisty/ the other Aelistie* (1562) *Elistra* (1631)

From 1541 onwards, Ellister is almost always listed as two separate entities – chiefly the contrasted pair of Wester and Easter Ellister. Interestingly, however, local tradition does not tend to make an onomastic distinction between the two (Lena McKeurtan pers. comm.) and when it does, the former farm is refered to not as Wester Ellister, but Ellister Mór (Donald MacFadyen pers. comm.). The associations and context of each of these farm-districts will be discussed separately after the section on etymology.

Etymology: ON *Ölvir* (m) OR *hella* (f) + *staðir* (m pl)

While there can be little doubt that this name is Norse in origin, there has been some debate as to what its constituent parts might have been. As far as the generic is concerned, scrutiny of the early forms points to ON *staðir* rather than the *setr* suggested by Gillies (1906:51) and Thomas (MS) – although not just, as Maceacharna (1976:90 FN16) has argued, because the latter means 'small-holding' and would therefore be an inappropriare name for such a large farm.[221] Had the generic here been *setr*, we might have expect the /s/, in the initial consonant cluster /se/ to become lenited in accordance with the normal rules of Gaelic pronunciation (Chapter 6). This has not happened.

The specific is rather more difficult to interpret. Maceacharna's (*loc. cit.*) offering of ON *eyland*, island, on the assumption that the holding included the 'big island off Portnahaven' must be rejected. Lack of cognates aside, there is no evidence that Orsay was linked with Ellister before the 17th century.

Gillies' suggestions of *hellir* (m) or 'cave' and *helga* (v) or 'hallow', however, are both worthy of further consideration. While the ruin at Cladh Elisteir, some 200m to the NNW of the farm-buildings at Wester Ellister, has been tentatively identified as the remains of a medieval chapel (see below), it seems unlikely that this would have given rise to the place-name *Helgasetr*. If the ruins do derive from a chapel in existence during the period of Norse naming and there was a link between it and the farm-name, we might instead have expected an ON *kirkju-* or 'church' compound (*cf.* NSL:197). If on the other hand we reject this interpretation but accept that the original form of the specific was something akin to /Helga/ this might reflect non-Christian Norse religious activity or, perhaps more likely, the ON male personal name *Helgi* (*cf.* Thomas MS). But even so, there is no suitable stop in local pronunciation or all but one of the written forms of the name.

Given the presence of a large and now partially collapsed cave less than 200m to the south of Wester Ellister farm-buildings, it is perhaps more plausible that the descriptive was ON *hellir* (m) (gen = *hellis*)

[221] It must be presumed here that Maceacharna means *sætr* (n) which implies 'mountain pastures, dairy lands' (CVC:619) and by extention 'small-holding'. ON *setr* is often used in the more prestigious sense of 'seat' or 'residence' (CVC:524), even, as in the case of *konungs-setr*, a king's residence (see Chapter 6).

'a cave in rocks' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:151 & 155). But as there are many larger and more conspicuous caves on the island, it seems unlikely that this particular example would have been picked out as the defining characteristic of Ellister.

A more likely alternative is provided by the ON noun *hella* (f) 'flat rock'. The unusually sheltered sea-inlet of Port Ellister, which lies immediately to the E of the farm-buildings at W Ellister, is the only one of its kind along this stretch of coast. As can be seen from the Figure 68 below this particular bay is framed by large, flat rocks. Given the likely importance of this location for the safe beaching, anchoring and loading/unloading of ships, it is possible that the specific is ON *hella* – perhaps as a shortened version of *laðhella*, 'a rock from which one can load a ship' or **skiphella* (*cf.* NG I:305; NSL 198).

The specific 'Helle' can be found in place-names throughout Norway, either as a specific element or simplex place-name (*cf.* NSL 150). Although Rygh lists 3 'Hellestad's in Norway (one each in Akershus, Bratsberg and Hedemarkens amt) and one Hellesætr (in Nordre Bergenhus amt), he is unhelpfully vague as to possible derivations, interpreting the specific element in the first three examples as the male personal names Herleifr or Herleik and in the last as 'a hut under an overhanging cliff'. The specifying agent in Ellibister in Rendal parish, Orkney, has also been interepreted as a non-specified personal name (Marwick 1952:120).

Collapsed cave near W Ellister

W Ellister farm-buildings and Port Ellister, from the cave to the right

Figure 68: Topographical context for *Ellister

Despite the suitability of ON **Hellastaðir*, the /e/ in the initial syllable is difficult, albeit not impossible, to reconcile with the [ø:] of local pronunciation. A final alternative would therefore be to see the name as ON **Ölvirsstaðir* 'Ölvir's steading'. Jakobsen (1936:149) notes an Elvister and an Ellister in Shetland,

which he derives from the male personal names Eilífr/Alvir/Ölvir + *staðir*. In Iceland, Jónsson (1907-15:436) has identified an Ölvaldsstaðir (commonly known as Ölvastaðir) (IX), an Ölvisstaðir (V), and a Höllustaðir (XII), where the generic is thought to be a female personal name.

Wester Ellister [ˌøːlastɪɣ ˈmoːr]

NR 188 522

'Elister Wester, Balliegale and Anscallie, being wadset for 3500 merks, is a very good wadset, and has a good isle annexed unto it' (1722)

Ilistick Arrarauch (1541a) *Ilistik Ararauch* (1541b) *Eilistrie Erirath* (1563) *Elistyarrerach* (1584) *Ylistick Arrauch* (1614) *Ilistich-arerauch* (1627) *Ochtomoir, Elistra, adeveill (sic.)* (1631) *Elisdil Oc.* (1654) *Illestickaremuch* (1662) *Illestickareauch* (1665) *Elistereyrarach* (1686) *Elister Wester* (1722) *Elister Errarich* (1722) *Wester Ellister* (1733) *Wester Elister* (1741) *Ellister (Wester)* (1749) *Ellister Wester* (M)

Associations:

Ochtomoir, Elistra, adeveill (sic.) (1631) *Glenfansay, Allistereтroch, Illestickareauch, Belliegowrie and Ochtofad* (1665) *Elistereyrarach, Illandowrrsay, Balladalie, Corieskallag* (1686) *Elister Wester, Balliegallie and Anscallaige* (1722) *Wester Elister, Balygawly, Archally and Island Oversaw, Easter Elister* (1741) *Ellister (Wester) & Port Wemyss* (1749)

Aniquities:

Although, the turf covered ruin at Cladh Eilisteir, some 200m to the NNW of the farm-buildings at Wester Ellister, has been identified by the RCAHMS as a **chapel**, there are no records of ecclesiastical activity at this site (NRMS:NR15SE 7). While the mound is oriented E-W and measures 13.0m by 7.0m over turf-covered walling 0.6m high with a 1.1m wide entrance in the S wall, the long term dumping of rocks from field clearance make it difficult to gauge the actual size or true provenance of the structure(s).

Approx. 1.35km to the SW of the farm buildings and well within the confines of the holding as illustrated on MacDougall's map, are the remains of the **fort** of An Dun. The ruins occupy the strategically advantageous Rhinns Point (NRMS:NR15SE 2)

Context:

The name **Cnoc Undail** [ˌkrɔːxk ˈɯn.d̥ɐ̆ɬ], which denotes a 57m high knoll approx. 500m SW of the farm buildings at W. Ellister, appears to contain the ON generic *dalr*. While the specific is likely to be ON *hund-*, from *hundr* (m), 'hound', giving a literal translation of 'Dogdale' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:116), the actual meaning of this name requires further explanation. Although the element *hund-* is not uncommon in Norwegain farm-names, and can, as Olsen points out (*cf.*

NSL:16), refer to a rutting place for dogs,[222] it is often used as a man's name – either as it stands or in the form *Hundi* (*cf.* Marwick 1952:135 *etc.*). Jónsson (1907-15:520) interprets the specific element in the Icelandic Hundadalr (XI), as a male personal name. With regards to skerries and islets, however, it is also used to indicate something dangerous – as in Hundhammar, 'dangerous cliff' (NSL:164) – or as an adjective meaning 'a great many'. Hunvåko (ON **Hundvoku*), which occurs several times in the vicinity of Stavanger has been interpreted as the 'multiple fishing grounds' (NSL:164). The specific elment in NG's only 'Hundsdal' (in Lister and Mandals amt) was interpreted by Rygh as the animal name *hundr* used as a man's byname or the man's name Hunn. NRI (p.245) lists 2 'Hunddalen' and 2 'Hundsdal' (one of which is a farm); NRII (pp.254-5), examples of 'Hundsdal', 'Hunndalen', 'Hunnedalen' etc; and NRIII (pp.197-8) several place-names containing or consisting of the onomastic elements 'Hunddal', 'Hunsdal' *etc.*

As Cnoc Undail in Islay could hardly be described as dangerous, it seems likely that the specific refers to dogs or a man called Hundi/ Hunn *etc.* (see also, notes on Airigh nam Beist in Kildalton but *cf.* Chapter 8).

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Easter Ellister [ˌøːlastɪɣ ˈɛrɛrɑx / ˌøːlastɪ ˈiɛrɛrɑx]

NR 202 535

'Elister Easter is a good quarter-land and is down of the generall rental £55, 3s. 8d.: its down of rental 1644 £66, 10s. 4d.' (1722)

Alester Etrach (1541a) *Alester Ettrach* (1541b) *Eilistrie vek Archar* (1563) *Eistlystichfarchar* (1584) *Alester Etrach* (1614) *Alister-etrach* (1627) *Elistraerrerach* (1631) *Elisdil Yc.* (1654) *Alestereltroch* (1662) *Allisteretroch* (1665) *Elistererrarach* (1686) *Elister Easter* (1722) *Easter Elister* (1733) *Easter Elister* (1741) *Ellister (Easter)* (1749) *Ellister Easter* (M)

Associations:

Glenfansay, Allisteretroch, Illestickareauch, Belliegowrie and Ochtofad (1665) *Wester Elister, Balygawly, Archally and Island Oversaw, Easter Elister* (1741)

Context:

The name of the *c.* 60m high knoll of **Cnoc a'Chuil** directly to the N of the present farm-buildings at Easter Ellister, should probably be regarded as a G adaptation of a pre-existing ON *kúla*, 'knob-like hill' (see notes on Cultoun *etc.* above).

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[222] Jakobsen (1936:69 & 146) prefers to see the element *hund* as an indication of places where puppies were drowned!

Foreland (House) [ˈfɔrʔlanʔd̥ə / ˈfɔɾ̊t.ənd̥ə]

NR 269 643

Forland (1507) *Foreland* (1509) *Foreland* (1541a) *Foreland* (1541b) *Forland* (1542) *Foreland* (1614) *Foirland* (1615) *Foirland* (1617) *Foreland* (1627) *Foirland* (1631) *Forling* (1654) *Forelay* (1662) *Forland* (1665) *Forland* (1686) *Foreland* (1722) NOT 1749; *Foreland* (M)

Etymology: ON *fóðr* (n) + *land* (n)

Thomas (MS) suggests ON **Forlendi*, 'Foreland, the land between the sea and the hills' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:78). While this seems like a reasonable approximation of the local topography, it should be noted that the two 'Forlandet's in Kristians amt, Norway, have been interpreted by Rygh as *foder-land*, 'the farm producing fodder or hay' – an equally likely descriptive of the relatively fertile and sheltered lands of Foreland in Islay.

Associations:

Camkilane et Forland (1507) *Foreland. Lek* (1541a) *Foreland. Lek* (1541b) *Arehallich et Forland* (1542) *Foreland, Leck* (1614) *Archalich et Foirland* (1615) *Arehalich et Foirland* (1617) *Kowle, Sunarlin, Foirland & ye Lowerheis of Ruachrmanlin* (1631) *Coull, Sinderline, Forland, Machirvealin and Cladavell* (1686) *Shinderline, Cuill, Masherrveolin, and Foreland, and Cladeveill* (1722)

Context:

Druim na h-Erasaid (22m) lies about 1.6km to the NE (see notes on Coulabus in Kilchoman).

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Gartacharra [ˌg̊aɾ̊t əˈxaʔrə]

'Gartacharra a very good possession, and of an easie rent' (1722)

NR 253 613

Gartker (1507) *Gartequhar* (1541a) *Gartequheire* (1541b) *Garthcarra* (1562) *Gartacharra* (1584) *Gartequhar* (1614) *Gartequhar* (1627) *Gartchara* (1631) *Garteqhuair* (1662) *Gartcharia* (1563) *Garteqhuar* (1665) *Gartcharr* (1686) *Gartahar* (1733) *Gartacharra* (1686) *Gartahar* (1741) *Gartachara* (1749) *Gorlacher* (M)

Etymology: G *gart* (m) + *a* (art) + *carragh* (f)

From G **Gart a'Charragh*, 'the field of the standing stone' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:100). There is a standing stone *c.* 2.7m in height in an arable field to the W of the current Gartacharra farm centre (RCAHMS 1984:68).

Associations:

Gartker et Carnglas (1507)

Antiquities:

Dun na H-Uamha, 'the fort of the cave', lies *c.* 1.3km to the NW (NRMS:NR26SW 4).

A small turf and boulder banked enclosure some 150m to the NW of the modern farm buildings has been identified by the RCAHMS as a possible **burial ground** (NMRS:NR26SE16).

Context:

Cnoc Allanta and **Cnoc a'Cùil** are approx. 0.9km to the S and 0.7km to the SSW respectively (see notes on Conisby above).

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Gearach [ˈg̊ʲaːrax]

'Gerrie a good possession' (1722)

NR 223 593

Garry (1507) *Gerre* (1509) *Garremoir/ Garrebeg* (1541a) *Girremoir/ Girrebeg* (1563) *Garremoir/ Garrebeg* (1584) *Garremoir/ Garrebeg* (1614) *Garremoir/ Garrebeg* (1627) *Garreis* (1631) *Garremoir/ Garrobeg* (1662) *Garromoir/ Garrobeg* (1665) *Garie* (1686) *Gerrie* (1722) *Gerrich* (1733) *Gerrich* (1741) *Grarach (sic)* (1749) *Garrich* (M)

Etymology: Uncertain: ON *gerði* (n) OR G *geàrraidh* (m)

While both Thomas (MS) and Macheacharna (1976:118) favour an etymology of G **Gearr fhaich*, 'short field', this does not accord particularly well with the early forms. When these are taken alongside local pronunciation, it seems more likely that the name derives from ON **Gerði* (n), 'an enclosed plot of land' (*cf.* Indl:51; Gillies 1906:152). Whether this simplex reflects an originally Norse coinage, however, or a Gaelic coinage using a Norse loan-word, is impossible to say. According to (Cox 2003:123), the G element *geàrraidh* meaning 'green pasture about a township 'can be seen as coming into use at some stage between the 9th and 11th centuries'. It appears to have been borrowed from ON *gerði* before the development of G [ð'] > [ɣ'] is thought to have taken place (*cf.* O'Rahilly 1976:53-57; Thurneysen 1975:76-77).

A search for 'Gerði%' on NG returned 184 hits including dozens of simplex examples. This element is also common in Shetland (Jakobsen 1936:45-6) and in the Faroes' northern islands, where it can also refer to cliffs which can be scaled by sheep in only two places (Matras 1933:116-7). In addition to this, Jónsson (1907-15:464) notes 6 singular (I, VII, XI, XVIII, XIX) and 3 plural (IV, V, VI), simplex examples of *Gerði* in Iceland; and Oftedal (1954:377) a *Gearraidh Mòr* in Lewis, which he derives from ON **Gerði*, 'fenced piece of land'.

Associations:

Ouchtmor et Garry (1507) *Ochtmoir et Gerre* (1509) *Tochtomoir. Garremoir. Garrebeg. Tochtomoremissay Gremissay* (1541a) *Tochtomoir, Garremoir, Garrebeg, Tochtomoirmissay, Gremissay* (1614) *Crymsayis and Garreis* (1631) *Garrobeg, Orthomoir, Missay, Gremissay and Clagenauch* (1665)

Antiquities:

Although the **dun** of **Dùn Glas an Lòin Ghuirm** (G 'Grey Fort of the Blue Loch') is aprox. 850m to the N (RMNS:NR26SW 26), Greamsa, at 350m to the NE, is half a kilometre closer (see below).

Context:

Abhainn Gearach flows from **Loch Gearach**, which is approx. 250m NE of the farm buildings at Garrich, into Loch Indaal at Port Charlotte. **Cnoc Thòrnisaig** lies about 1.5km to the NE (see notes on Tormisdale below).

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*Glassans [ˈɡlaːsaʔsˈiːɣ]

'Glassens a very good possession, the milne, kilne. and changehouse thereof being a very good pennieworth' (1722)

NR 240 570

Glessans (1507) *Glassanis* (1509) *Glassansay* (1541a) *Glassansay* (1541b) *Glassance* (1562) *Glassance* (1563) *Glassance* (1584) *Glassansay* (1614) *Glassansay* (1627) *Glassame* (1631) *Glassans* (1654) *Glensansay* (1662) *Glassans* (1686) *Glessans* (1722) *Glassens, Glassans* (1733) *Glassansy* (1741) *Glassins* (1749) *Glassans* (M)

Etymology: ON *glær* (m) + *staðir* (m)

Although the generic in this name is nadly 'eroded', the terminal /s/ /say/ *etc.* in the written forms and terminal [s'iːɣ] in local pronunciation point to ON *staðir* (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:77). As such the original

form of the specific is unlikely to have been the G adjective *glas*, meaning 'grey' or 'green', but a derivative of ON *glær* (m), 'glaring', alluding to the sea.[223]

While there are no exact congnates for **Glæs(a)staðir*, Glais uig in Kildalton parish appears to share the same specific (see notes on Ardmeinach) as does the Norwegian Glesnes (*Glensnes* 1567 Glesnæs 1723) in Søndre Bergenhus amt. Rygh derives the specific element in this last name from ON **glesja* (n) or *glær* (f) (*sic.*) meaning 'something glimering or glinting' (*cf.* NSL:128-9) – comparing it with the mythological place-name Glasir. The name as a whole is explained as a reference to the nearby river, the lake from which it runs into the sea or the farm's high location and unimpeded view to the S (*cf.* NSL:129 under 'Glesvær').

Although the exact location of the medieval and early modern centres of Glassans are unkown, its position on maps of the 18th and 19th centuries suggests a locus in the vicinity of the West End 'suburb' of Port Charlotte. The farm-district generally and its later centre specifically would therefore accord with at least two of three of the preconditions suggested above – there is a river (to be discussed below) and an unimpeded view to the S and across the waters of Loch Indaal to the E.

A further alternative which cannot be entirely dismissed is that the specific represents an ON personal name. NG lists 2 examples of Gløsen in Nordlands amt, a Gløsvaag in Romsdals amt, a Gløsen in Nordlands amt and a Gløstad and a Gløshaugen in Søndre Trondhjems amt. In all six cases, Rygh considers the specific element to be the male personal name Glœðir.

Associations:

Glassame, Carmglassoir, Nearbols (1631) *Miln of Skiba* (1733) *Miln of Skibo* (1741)

Antiquities:

Contrary to its RCAHMS classification, the **chapel** of **Cilleach Mhicheil** (NRMS:NR25NW 2) is nowhere near Port Charlotte and was most likely to have been associated with the farm-district of Carn (see above).

The OS Name Book of 1878 reported that the lighthouse at Rubh' an Dùin was built on top of a **dun – An Dùn** (NMRS:NR25NE 3). Given the low-lying, non-defensive location and complete absence of remains, however, RCAHMS, have since expressed doubts as to the existence of this structure

Context:

The distillery village of Port Charlotte, which replaced the farm centre at Glassans in the early 19th century, is named for the 2nd wife of its founder, Frederick William Campbell (RCAHMS 1984:297-8).

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[223] Interestingly, the common Icelandic phrase *að kasta á glæ*, 'to squander, throw away (lit. into the sea)', can be compared directly with Scots *gley*, *cf.* the lines in Burn's 1785 poem 'To a Mouse on Turning up Her Nest with a Plough' – 'The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men// Gang aft agley'.

Its Gaelic name, however, **Port Sgioba**, is older and derived presumably from an earlier ON **Skipá*, ship river (Gillies 1906:153 suggests 'Shipton'). Although the river in question is little more than a stream, Maceacharna (1976:87) notes that: 'if it be objected that the tiny burn here is hardly navigable water, it may be said [...] that the creeks here are still in use for small craft'. The nearby bay of **Port à Bhàta** [ˌpɔr̊t əˈvaːhtə], port of the boats, serves perhaps to strengthen this etymology.

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Grimsay [ˈgriːm.s'a]

NR 226 605

Grimsay (1507) *Gremmyssay* (1509) *Gremissay* (1541a) *Gremsay* (1562) *Gremsay* (1563) *Gremissay* (1614) *Garrinsay* (1615) *Gremissay* (1627) *Crymsayis* (1631) *Grymsa* (1654) *Gremissay* (1662) *Gremissay* (1665) *Grymsay* (1686) *Grimsa* (1722) *Grimsa* (1733) *Grimsey* (1741) *Greamsay* (1749) *Greamsa* (M)

Etymology: ON *Grímr* (m) + *staðir* (m pl)

ON **Grímsstaðir*, 'Grim's steading' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:77). While Gillies (1906:230) suggests that the specific here is ON **gríma* (f) 'a hood or a cowl' used as a by-name for the god Oðinn (who is said to have travelled in disguise (*cf.* DNM:118 'Grímnir')), it seems more likely that we are dealing with the common ON personal-name *Grímr* (m) (*cf.* NID:359-61) – an interpretation supported by the two dozen or so Norwegian examples of Grimstad (*cf.* NSL:133). Of the 17 'Grimstads' listed in NG, there are 4 in Søndre Bergenhus amt, 3 each In Kristians, Romsdals and Smaalenenes amt, 2 in Lister og Mandals amt and 1 in Nordlands amt. In addition to this, Marwick (1952:142) lists a Grimeston in Harray, Orkney; and Jakobsen (1936:100, 150) a Grimista in Mainland, Shetland – both of which appear to be derived from ON **Grímsstaðir*. Jónsson (1907-15:413) also notes 11 examples of Grímsstaðir in Iceland (II, IV, VII, VIII, IX, X, XVI (2), XVIII, XIX (2)). A possible cognate may also be found in Lewis Grimersta (*cf.* Oftedal 1954:383).

Associations:

Tochtomoir. Garremoir. GarrebeG Tochtomoremissay Gremissay (1541a) *Octomoir-Gremsay* (1562) *Octomoir Gremsay* (1563) *Tochtomoir, Garremoir, Garrebeg, Tochtomoirmissay, Gremissay* (1614) *Garrinsay et Kilvalan* (1615) *Crymsayis and Garreis* (1631) *Garrobeg, Orthomoir, Missay, Gremissay and Clagenauch* (1665) *Ochtomoir, Cultorsay, Lorgba, Grymsay, Gylin and Dowdilmore* (1686) *Octamore, Cultorsa, Lorgba, Grimsa, Dudilmore, and Gaylin* (1722) *Octomore, Grimsey, Coultersay & Lergba, Dudellmoir, Gylyne, Changehouse, malt-kilne, and Miln of Skibo* (1741

Antiquities:

Three **duns** are located in the vicinity of the ruins of what was once, presumably, the centre of Greamsa: **Dùn Glas an Lòin Ghuirm**, c. 300m to the SW (RMNS:NR26SW 26); **Dùn Bhar a Claom**, *c.* 1.05km to the NNW (NRMS:NR26SW 30); and **Dùn Midier**, *c.* 300m to the N, from which the other two duns are clearly visible (NRMS:NR26SW 28).

The place-name Dùn Bhar a Claom [ˌd̥uːn ˌvar əˈxløːm] can be compared with the hill names discussed under Kelsa below. As the dun in question sits atop an isolated, rocky knoll projecting into the middle of a swamp, it is possible that the onomastic unit 'Bhar a Cloam' is in fact a G rationalisation of ON **Borgarklettr* 'The cliff of the fortress'. While there are no direct cognates, the element *borg* is found in many nature compounds in Norway (*cf.* Indl:44-5).

Context:

Maol Chuirn-a-mheall [ˌmøːl ˌxuːrn əˈviəl] or [ˌmøːl ˌkuːrn əˈviəl] (139m) lies approx. 1.5km to the NW. While this name appears to be Gaelic, it's rather contrived lexical content, 'the hill-top of the cairn of the hill', points to G adaptation of an earlier ON *Chuirn-a-mheall. The most likely generics here are ON *fjall* (n), 'hill, mountain' or possibly *völlr* (m), 'field'. A specific of *Korn(a)* referring perhaps to the fetility of the land on the eastern slopes of this hill would give ON **Kornafjall* or **Kornavöllr* – both of which would provide reasonable phonetic approximations of the current forms. The hills in this part of the Rhinns are green to the top, and as they are not particularly high, it is conceivable that some of the more sheltered valleys may have been used in the past for the cultivation of oats or barley. While the element *korn* is not particularly common in Norwegian place-names (*cf.* Kornsjø in NSL:189), NR does list one mountain called as Kornberget in southern Norway (NRI:301) and another known as Kornfjellet in the centre of the country (NRII:314).

Cnoc Thornisaig [ˌkrɔːxk ˈ[h]ɔrnɪ.siɡ̊ʲ] lies approx 1km to the E (see notes on Coultorsa above).

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Gruinart (Farm) [ˈgrɯːñiaɾt]

NR 278 682

Grumwurd (1507) *Grunnort* (1509) *Crumurd* (1541a) *Crumurd* (1541b) *Grunyord* (1549) *Grwnort* (1562) *Grownnort* (1563) *Growmorte* (1584) *Crunurd* (1614) *Crunurde* (1627) *Grimzeours* (1631) *Gruynord* (1654) *Crowmend* (1662) *Crowmend* (1665) *Grunard* (1686) *Grannard* (1722) *Grunart* (1741) *Gruinart* (1749) *Grunart* (M)

Etymology: ON *grunn* (adj) + *fjörðr* (m)

From ON **Grunnfjörðr*, 'Shallow firth' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:79; Gillies 1906:230) – a perfect description of the mudflats which dominate the southern part of Loch Gruinart at low-tide. This can be compared with the Grunnfjord in Nordlands amt and the Grønsfjord in Lister og Mandals amt listed in NG (NG 16:278); numerous other nature and habitative names in Norway (NSL:134); or the Grundarfjörðr listed by Jónsson (1907-15:510) in Iceland (X).

Associations:

Grunnort [morificatum de novo per McCane monasterio de Ornyssay] (1509) *Smawill, Kindcalyeane, Crumurd* (1541a) *Smawill, Kindcalyeane, Crumurd* (1541b) *Smalbill, Kyndcalzeane, Crunurd* (1614) *Leack, Sannagbeg, Keanchyllane in Machoroshinis, Grunard, and Corspallane* (1686) *Leack, Sannaigbeg, Grannard, and Caspellen; Granniard* (1722) *Grunart & c.* (1741)

Antiquities:

RCAHMS records a **burial ground** at Gruinard Cottage (NMRS:NR26NE11).

The **fortified island** in **Loch An Fhir Mhoir** is approx. 1.8km to the NW (NRMS:NR26NE 4).

Context:

Although the farm buildings at Gruinart are only about 300m to the SW of Loch Gruinart, the loch itself is so shallow at this point that it gives way to an expanse of mud-flats at low tide. While the closest point of permanent access to the sea at present appears to be at **Killnave**, some 3km to the N, the nearest decent harbour, is to be found at the head of Loch Indaal to the South.

The farm buildings of **Aoradh** are about 1km to the S. While Maceacharna (1976:79) suggests derivation from ON **Eyrarvágr*, 'gravel bank bay', it is difficult to see why the generic *vágr* is necessary when the simplex dative **Eyri* would provide an ealier alternative (*cf.* Gillies 1906:149 who sees the name as ON *eyrr* + G *adh*). Initial 'Ør' meaning 'gravel bank' is relatively common in Norwegian local names – both in compounds and as a simplex – where it is particularly common in Møre and Romsdal (*cf.* NSL:352).

Jónsson (1907-15:484-5) highlights 16 simplex examples of Eyri in Iceland (VI, VII (2), X (2), XII, XIII (6), XIV, XVIII (2), XXI (2)).

Loch Gruineart and **Tràigh Ghruineart** are nearby, with the promontory of **Rubha Luidhneis** [ru:ʔə ˈlu:ʔñəs] on the opposite side of Loch Gruinart from the farm. The onomastic unit **Luidhneis* in this last name warrants special attention. Given the previous examples of effective tautologies where the ON generic in the terminal *ex nomine* onomastic unit is mirrored by a prosthetic G analogue, it seems likely that the generic here is ON *nes*. NG lists farms named Ljønes and Ljones in Nordland and Søndre Bergenhus amt resp. While Rygh derives the generic in these from ON *lé* (m) in the gen. form *ljá*, 'scythe' – being descriptive of the shape of the headland – Bugge prefers *hlé* (n), 'shelter' (*cf.* NSL:206). Although the first of these would accord fairly well with the projecting gravel banks at Rubha Luidhneis in Islay, it should be noted that ON *ljá* as the nom. form of a derivative (f) noun means 'new-mown grass'. It is not impossible, therefore, that it was agricultural practise in the lush pastureland of this part of the island which gave rise to the name **Ljánes*.

The farm buildings at **Grainel** [ˈgri:ʔñial / ˈgre:ʔñial] lie about 1.6km to the SSW. This name appears to derive from ON **Grœnnvöllr* 'green field', an appropriate name for a farm on relatively high quality soil (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:79; Gillies 1906:52; see also notes on Glenegedale in Kildalton Parish).

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*Grulin [ˌgruʔlɪŋ]

NR 241 681

Grudin (1584) *Groden* (1562) *Groden* (1563) *Gaylin* (1722) *Crulin* (1733) *Crulin* (1741) *Grulint* (1749) *Grulint* (M)

Etymology: ON *Gró(a/u)* (f) or *Grjót* (n) + *land* (n)

This name is generally considered problematic. While Gillies (1906:152) was unable to decide between an original G *groth*, 'gravel', or ON *grýla*, 'ogre, hag', Maceachara (1976:119) chose to gloss the issue by reference to cognates on Mull and Skye. The correspodence of local pronunciation wth later forms of the name points to ON **Grjótland*, 'stoney farm' reflected in the farms relatively low extent (40d. in 1562) or perhaps **Gró(a/u)land*, 'Gró's farm'. While there are no exact cognates for the former, both specifics are relatively common in Norwegian farm-names – with NG listing a Groland in Buskerud's amt.

Associations:

Octamore, Cultorsa, Lorgba, Grimsa, Dudilmore, and Gaylin (1722) *Crulin and Ardtornish* (1733) *Crulin and Ardtornish* (1741)

Antiquities:

The **dun** at **Carnduncan** is approximately 1km to the S (NRMSNR26NW 21).

Context:

On modern OS maps, Grulinbeg (Grulint) and Grulin (the smaller farm) are separated by Carnduncan.[224] While the area around Carnduncan and Grulin appears to fall within the bounds of Leek on MacDougall's map, it seems more likely that they were once part of Grulin.

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Kelsay ['kʲa:l.s'a]

NR 192 560

'Kelsa is down of the generall rental 20 lib. And presents being estimate to £33, 17s. 4d., and in Rental 1644 it pays 200 merks silver rent and full presents, it being a very good present' (1722)

Kelsa (1507) *Kilfey* (1509) *Kelsay* (1541a) *Kelsay* (1541b) *Kealsay* (1562) *Kealsay* (1563) *Kealsay* (1584) *Kelsay* (1614) *Kelsay* (1627) *Kealsa* (1631) *Killsay* (1662) *Kilsayth* (1665) *Kelsay* (1686) *Kelso* (1733) *Kesla* (1722) *Kelsoe* (1741) *Kelsay* (1749) *Kelsa* (M)

Etymology: ON *_Kel_ (m) _staðir_ (m pl)

Maceacharna (1976:90 FN15) suggests derivation from ON **Kjalarstaðir*, 'Keel steading' – with the 'keel' in question being a standing stone (*cf.* the naming of *Kjalarnes Grœnlendinga saga*: Magnusson & Pálsson 1965:60). If the specific was indicative of a 'keel', however, it would perhaps be easier to see this as a natural feature. The current farm-buildings at Kelsa sit at the western end of a highly conspicuous arm of Beinn Tart a'Mhill. Alternatively, the location of the farm-district on the ridge of mountains which run down the centre of the Rhinns has clear analogies with the mountain range known as Kjølen, 'the keel', which runs down the eastern boundary of Norway with Sweden (*cf.* NSL:184). But while ON **Kjalarsetr* would be broadly acceptable however it was got, there are very few cognate examples. A search for 'Kjalar%' on NG resulted in only one hit – farm number 138, Kjøler-Ødegaarden in Smaalenenes amt.

A second possibility is that the specific is the ON male personal name Ketil. According to Lind (NID:684-7), this name was common in both Norway and Iceland throughout the Middle Ages, where it was borne by a large number of landnámsmen and several fathers and grandfathers of landnámsmen, often in attenuated forms such as Kiel and Kel. The genitive of the attenuated form Kel, **Kels*, would give **Kelsstaðir* – a far easier match for the written forms of Islay Kelsay.

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[224] Carnduncan (NR 244 672): *Carondonachy* (1749) – from G **Carn Donnachaidh*, 'Duncan's cairn' (Thomas MS; Maccacharna 1976:115).

A search for 'Ketill%' on NG gave 70 hits, including a Kjelsø in Bratsberg amt – where Rygh intrerprets the specific as Kjell (det gamle Ketill) – Kjelsaas in Akershus amt; and eight examples of Kjelstad – 2 each in Buskerruds and Søndre Trondhjems amt and a further 1 apiece in Stavanger, Nedenes, Nordlands and Romsdals amt. While the first choice of specific in all of these is once again Ketill, Rygh suggests in the case of farm number 40, 'Kjelstad', that this might also be from the river-name 'Kelda', which he discusses under 'Tjelle' in Evenes (NG 16:302). In addition to these, Jónsson (1907-15:433) notes 10 examples of Ketilsstaðir in Iceland (II, IV, VI, XI (2), XVI, XVIII, XX (2), XXI); Marwick (1952:20) lists a Ketteltoft in Sanday, Orkney; and Jakobsen (1936:152) a Kettelster and a Kellister in Shetland – all of which are thought to contain the ON personal-name *Ketill*.

Associations:

Kelsa et Kintesane (1507) *Kilfey et Kyntisan* (1509) *Kilcavane and Kelsay* (1541a) *Kilcavane and Kelsay* (1541b) *Kelsage and Kiltayn* (1562) *Kilcavane and Kelsay* (1614) *Kilcavan et Kelsay* (1627) *Kealsa, Killaglan and Ilandoursa* (1631) *Kilcaven et Killsay* (1662) *Kiltavin and Kilsayth* (1665) *Kelsay and Kiltechmes* (1686)

Antiquities:

There is a **dun** some 650m to the ESE, on the north bank of the Losset Burn guarding the pass between Cnoc a'Mhill and Cnoc Garbh a'Mhill (NRMS:NR15NE 15).

While the association of Kelsa with the name Kilcavan in the 16th and 17th century rentals suggests that there may have been a chapel site and/or burial ground in the vicinity, there is no mention of any such site in the RCAHMS Inventory. It has since been noted, however, that there is a conspicuous turf-covered ruin (*c.* 6x10m) to the E Kelsa farm-centre comparable in several respects to those of other suspected chapel sites in Islay (D. Caldwell, pers. comm.). Analogy with Kilcavan in Wexford, Ireland, suggests that the site would have been dedicated to St Kevin (Hogan 1902:55) – an early Irish saint 'about whom hardly anything is known for certain' (Joyce 1920:400).

Context:

The names of three nearby hills are worth noting here: **Cnoc Garbh a'Mhill** [ˌkrɔːxk ˌgarĭv ə ˈvil] (*c.* 120m); **Beinn Tart a'Mhill** [ˌbiŋ ˈtaṙt ə ˌvil] (220m); and **Cnoc a'Mhill** [ˌkrɔːxk əˈvil] (165m).

At first glance, all three appear to have been formed by the addition of G *cnoc-* or *beinn-* to pre-existing G '-mhill' compounds – resulting in the lexically improbable 'Hill of the rough hill', 'Hill of the thirsty hill' and 'Hill of the hill' respectively. When this effective tautology is reviewed alongside the morphemic structures of these names, however, it seems more likely that all three are in fact G rationalisations of pre-

existing ON *–fjall* or 'hill' compounds. Ascertaining the specifics elements in these names, however, is not quite so easy.

The most problematic is **Garbh a'Mhill*. While Maceacharna's (1976:77) suggestion of ON **Gørvi* provides a reasonable phonological approximation, the resultant meaning of 'hill of the supplies' is not only difficult to fathom but completely without parallel in the Norse world. Allowing for the disappearance or hyper-correction of a weak initial /s/ (*cf.* Cox 2002:64), there are three slightly more plausible alternatives – ON **Skarfafjall*, from *skarfr* (m), 'cormorant'; **Skarðafjall*, giving a meaning of 'cleft mountain' (*cf.* NSL:278) and **Skarpafjellet*, 'barren or bare mountain'.

Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) can still be found in Islay (*cf. Ogilvie* 2003:31). But if they were previously common, it seems unlikely that they should be associated with this one hill in particular. Similarly, while **Skarpafjall* in the form **Skarvafjall* (*cf.* NSL:278) is not unknown in Norway[225] and is a reasonable phonological approxiamation of the specific, the hill in question is now completely aforested. While the current plantation is a recent development, the sheltered environs of Gleann Amaind on the N slopes of this hill are always likely to have supported scrub woodland – but it is precisely this natural feature which holds the key to the name. As Gleann Amaind provides a pass through the central ridge of the Rhinns linking Nerabus on the E coast with Lossit on the W, it seems most likely that the name derives from ON **Skarðafjall*. This last example is also the most frequently attested of the three possibilities in the Norwegian place-name record (*cf.* NR I:507-8; NRII: 547-8; NRIII: 448; see also Figure 69 below).

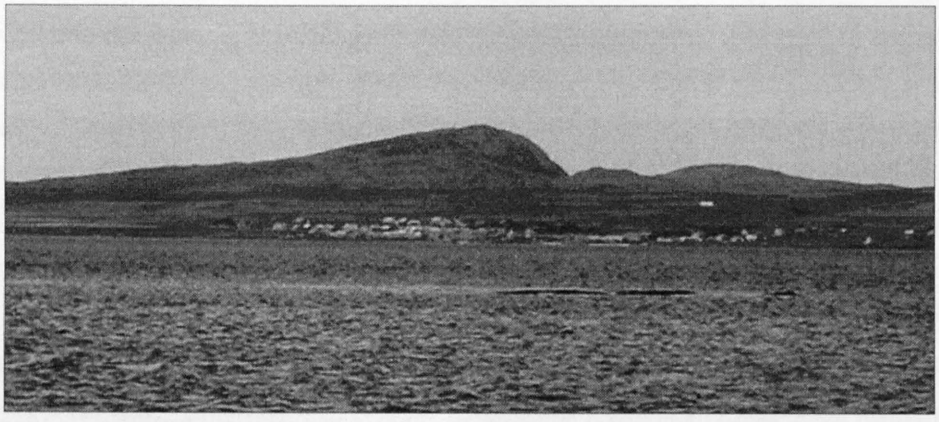

Figure 69: Beinn Tart a'Mhill from Laggan Point

**Tart a'Mhill* is almost centrainly derived from ON **Hartafjall*, 'stag mountain', with *harta* being the gen pl. of *hjörtr*, 'stag' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:77). The transformation of initial /h/ to /t/, is a common

[225] Three examples of 'skarvfjell(et)' are listed in NR III (449); along with one in NRII (551) and a skarvanfjellet in NR I (510).

feature of G adaptations of ON place-names in Islay which can be explained in terms of the G grammar system (Chapter 6). 'Hjortedalen' *etc.* is very common in Norway (*cf.* NSL:155).

While Cnoc a'Mhill could be from a unique ON **Á(r)ffall*, 'river hill' – named perhaps for its proximity to the Lossit Burn – simplex ON **Fjall*, 'hill', seems more likely (*cf.* NSL:108-9).

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*Killerin and Brade

Kilchiaran [ˌkʲiʎə ˈxiːəran]

'Killcherrans a very good possession, alike good for sowing and holding' (1722)

NR 207 603

Kilkerane/ Uvirkilkerane/ Brakilkerane (1507) *Kilkerane/ Uvirkilkerane* (1509) *Kilcarranebeg/ Kilcaranemoir* (1541a) *Kilcaranebeg/ Kilcarranemore* (1541b) *Kilkeranebeg/ Kilkeranemoir* (1562) *Kilkerane moir/ Kilkerane beg* (1563) *Kilkeranmoir/ Kilkeranbeg* (1584) *Kilcaranbeg/ Kilcaranemoir* (1614) *Kilcarinbeg/ Kilcarenemoir* (1627) *Kilcherane Moir and Kilcherane Beg* (1631) *Kilcheran* (1654) *Kilrabenemoir* (1662) *Kilkaranemorr* (1665) *Kilcheran Moir/ Kilcheran Beg* (1686) *Killcherrans* (1722) *Kilcherin* (1733) *Kilcherran* (1741) *Kilchiaran* (1749) *Killerin* (M)

Etymology: G *cill (f)* + *Ciarain* (m)

G **Cille Ciarain*, 'the Church of St Kieran' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:52; Thomas MS). According to Watson (1926:278), the saint in question is likely to have been the influential Ciarán of Cluain mac Nois styled 'Mac in t-Sáir' whose obit is recorded in AU 549.

Associations:

Uvirkilkerane et Clagenach (1507) *Crossbarrich, Salligo, Brakilkerane* (1507) *Crossberrich Salego et Bray Kilkerane* (1509) *Uvirkilkerane Clagenach* (1509) *Kilkeranebeg and the Braid of Kilkerane* (1562) *Braid, Kilcherran* (1741)

Antiquities:

The Iron Age fortification of **Dun Chroisprig** is approx 1.25km to the N (see below) and the seaward facing bank of **Cnoc Chroisprig** about 1.5km to the SW on the border with Tormastill. As there are no Iron Age fortifications in the vicinity of Cnoc Chroisprig, the 'prig' element of this name must be assumed to be a metathesised form of ON *borg* (f) in the sense of 'rocky outcrop' (see notes on Lossit below), ON *brekka* (f) meaning 'large slope' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:78; NSL 79) or possibly ON *berg* (n) 'rocky eminence, see-facing cliff' (*cf.* Cox 1998:59-

65). Considering that this location coincides roughly with the border between Kilchiaran and Tormisdale, it is possible that the specific points to a now lost boundary cross.

The remains of **Cill Chiaran chapel** are situated about 350m to the SW of the farm buildings. While virtually only the E gable remains standing, it appears that the building itself was approx. 16m E-W by 6.5m externally over walls about 70cm thick and. According to Lamont's typological analysis, the east wall, which still stands almost to its full height, can be dated to the 13th century (NMRS:NR26SW8). Eight carved slabs have been found at the site, dating at the earliest to the 14th century (NRMS:NR26SW 6).

Context:

The lands of Killerin and Brade are not distinguished on MacDougall's map. However, the location of **Abhainn na Bràid** in the northern part of the holding suggests that Brade occupied the same position as the present Kilchiaran farms buildings, with Kilchiaran itself being located closer to the remains of the chapel.

The name **Got-bheinn** ['gɔht 'viŋ] (130m), which denotes a hill about halfway between Kilchiaran and Olistadh, also warrants closer examination. While it appears to contain the common G generic *beinn* (f) 'hill, mountain', the word order of specific-generic is unsual for a G place-name. This raises the possibility that the generic is in fact ON *bingr* (m), 'heap, mound' – used as a more precise description of the local topography. An interesting alternative would be to accept the name as a G *beinn* compound but to see this as an adaptation and part-translation of a pre-existing ON *fjall* (n) 'hill, mountain' coinage. Parallels can be drawn here with the documented history of Goat Fell in Arran. While the earliest recorded forms of this name point to derivation from an ON *-fjall* compound – *eg.* 'Keadefel Hil' on Blaue's 1654 map (from Pont's *c.* 1590 co-ordinates),[226] Pennant's mid 18th century rendition of it as both Goatfield and Gaoitbheinn (Simmons 1998:167) appears to show it being replaced by G in the vernacular, with later forms such as *Gaot-bheinn* pointing to a final transition in local usage to G – 'the mountain of the winds' (*cf.* Fraser 1999:58).

According to Fraser (*loc. cit.*), the specific element in the Norse form is normally taken to be ON **geit* (f) 'she-goat'. Without commenting on the applicability of this name to the Arran landscape, such an interpretation could be accepted for Islay's Got-bheinn. According to NSL (p.124) the use of 'Geita' and 'Galten' are extremely common in contrasted pairs of hill names in Norway.[227] Perhaps the second hill in the Islay pairing was the adjacent Cnoc a'Chromain (153m).

[226] See also http://www.nls.uk/digitallibrary/map/early/pont.html
[227] Jónsson (1907-15:539) also notes two examples of Geitafell in Iceland (XV, XVIII).

Alternatively, although possibly not quite as convincing, the specific could be ON *gott* – the neuter form of the ON adj. *góðr*, 'good' – which is what we might expect if the generic were the neuter noun *fjall*. A laudatory ON **Gottfjall*, 'good mountain', might have been coined in allusion to the percieved economic potential of this place. While there are no exact cognates in Norway, NR does list several dozen place-names beginning 'gott' *etc.* many of which might be derived from ON *gótt*.

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Brade [ˈb̥raːd̥ʒə]

NR 207 604

'Braid in Rentall 1644 paid full presents, and ordinarie in monnie rentals since that time, quherby this time is down of the true rent the sume of twentie pound thirteen shillings and down the generall rental forsaid £27, 13s., and is a very good tenement' (1722)

Brakilkerane (1507) *Bray* (1509) *Bray* (1541a) *Braid of Kilkerane* (1562) *Braid* (1563) *Braid* (1584) *Bray* (1614) *Bray* (1627) *Brayde* (1631) *Bray* (1665) *Bray* (1662) *Brayd* (1686) *Braid* (1722) *Braid* (1733) *Braid* (1741) [NOT 1749] *Brade* (M)

Etymology: G *bràighe* (m)

The probable location of this farm, uphill and upstream from the chapel at Kilkiaran point to derivation from G **am bràghad*, the definite, gen. form of the noun *bràigh* (m), meaning 'the upper part' or 'brae' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:150).

Associations:

Crossbarrich, Salligo, Brakilkerane (1507) *Crossberrich Salego et Bray Kilkerane* (1509) *Kilkeranebeg and the Braid of Kilkerane* (1562) *Braid, Kilcherran* (1741)

Antiquities; Context:

See Kilchiaran above

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*Killchoman (West); Killchoman (East)

As it appears from MacDougall's map that the centres of both West and East Killchoman were directly adjacent to one another, they will be discussed here as one unit.

Kilchoman [ˌkʲiʎə ˈxoʔmən]

NR 216 632

'Kilchomman is a choice and very large possession, having many parks and enclosures in it; wherein was once the choice mansion house of Calder in this countrie, and always possessed by Calder or his Tutor until Sir Archibald Campbell of Clunes, Tutor, his removal from this countrie, who at his removell and severall years before payed for this tenement 352 lib. of silver rent and teind 4 stots, and six bolls multer; yet in all is £69, 6s. 8d. more than when Sir Archibald possessed it at first, he having built a large malt kilne and change house and a good corn mylne upon it and many other improvements: and is very observable why strangers should have this tenement at an cheaper rent than any of Calders Tutors even possessed it' (1722)

Killecomman (1427) *Kilcomen/ Kilcoman* (1507) *Kilcolmane* (1509) *Gilquhomane* (1541a) *Gilquhoman* (1541b) *Kilchowman* (1562) *Kilthowman* (1563) *Kilthonan* (1584) *Kilquhoman* (1614) *Glenquhonane [vel Gilquhonane vel Kilquhoman]* (1627) *Kilchomen* (1631) *Kilchonain* (1654) *Kilchomane* (1686) *Keilchomane* (1686) *Killchomman* (1722) *Kilhomen* (1733) *Kilchoman* (1741) *Kilchoman* (1749) *Killchoman* (M)

Etymology: G *cill (f)* + *Coman* (m)

G **Cille Chomain*, 'St Choman's Church' (Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:52). Watson (1926:302) suggests that this particular saint, whose name is borne by 10 saints in the Mart. Don., is the same 'Presbyter honorabilis' mentioned in Adomnan's *Vita Columbae* who was the son of the sister of the fourth abbot of Iona.

Associations:

Kilcomen cum pertinentiis (1507) *Kilcolmane cum pertinens* (1509) *Kilcoman et Kilkerain* (1507) *Kilcolmane et Kilerane* (1509) *Keilchomane, Claignacht, Downane, Creuch, Kinaskill, Mulbuy and Crosbrig* (1686) *Killchomman, Clagnish, Downan, Croash, and Kynaskeill* (1722) *Mylne of Killchomman* (1722) *½ Kilchoman, ½ Miln of Kilchoman* (1741) *½ Kilchoman, ½ Miln of Kilchoman* (1741)

Antiquities:

The **dun** of **an Dùn** is *c.* 600m to the ENE (NRMS:NR26SW 3) on the modern holding of Rockside (earlier Meanland, see notes on Sunderland below); **Dùn Neadan** 'The fort of the nests' is *c.* 1.5km to the SW (NRMS:NR26SW 2); and **Dùn Chroisprig** is c.700m to the SSW (NRMS:NR26SW 5). The name of this last fortification, with its effectively tautological prosthetic 'Dùn', appears to be derived from a metathasised ON **Kross(a)borg*, 'the fort of the cross(es) or crossroads'. The (abandoned) farm of **Crosprig** some 600m to the NNE and a coastal feature known as **An Crois-sgeir** [əŋ ˈkrɔɪʃ.skiːr] about 800m to the WSW, suggest that this was once the name of a relatively important farm-district. The

specific in all three names may points to the (previous) existence of free-standing (boundary) crosses, of the type described below. The dun itself appears to 'guard' the narrow and srategically important coastal verge between the mountains and the sea which links Kilchoman and Kilchiaran (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:78; Gillies 1906:151-2; see also notes on Kilchiaran above).

Although the current **church** building, which is already derelict, dates only to 1827, Kilchoman is recorded as an independent parsonage within the gift of the Lords of the Isles from the second half of the 14th century until their confiscation in 1493 (OPS:273; Cowan 1967:97; RCAHMS 1984:196). As such, it is likely to have been furnished with a chapel at a much earlier date. It should be noted that the medieval church of Kilchoman had dependencies at Kilchiaran, Nerabolls and Kilnave and served a parish covering the whole of the Rhinns (RCAHMS 1984:366; NMRS:NR26SW10.00).

The discovery of two early Christian cross slabs *c.* 330m to the SW and *c.* 380m to the ESE of the church building (RCAHMS 1984:196-7), suggest that the site had been an important one in the pre-Norse period. It may have been cross (no.1) 330m to the SW of the Church or another similar monument which provided the inspiration for the naming of Dun Chroisprig, An Crois-sgeir and the Dùn in the old settlement of Crosprig discussed above.

While suitable ruins have yet to be identified, it is also possible that Kilchoman or environs was the site of one of the two mansions said to have been kept by the Lords of the Isles in Islay (*cf.* BI:474).

Context:

Glen Osamail [ˌgl̥ɛun ˈoʃəmæl] is situated in the far SE of this holding. Although formally a G *gleann* or 'valley' compound, it is possible that the onomastic unit *Osamail was transferred from a neighbouring but now lost Norse hill name.[228] While Maceacharna's (1976:87) derivation from ON **Œsiholmr*, which he translates as 'prominent hill', must be rejected on lexical and name typological grounds,[229] lenition of the /s/ in the first syllable, does suggest that the flanking vowels were previously 'slender' (see Chapter 6).

Although derivation from ON **Eystrafjall*, 'eastern hill' is morphologically, lexically and name-typologically possible (*cf.* Cnoc Oshamail under Daill in Kilarrow), it is difficult to see how this would apply to either of the flanking hills when both lie in the middle of a prominent WSW-ENE range.

A more plausible explanation might therefore be to see it as ON **Æsifjall* or **Esjufjall*, of which there are several cognate examples in Lewis, Iceland and elsewhere (*cf.* Oftedal 1954:395) – with the specific being seen as the dative of ON *áss* (m) 'ridge' or perhaps a derivation thereof with a similar meaning (*cf.*

[228] See Cox (2002:45-6) for a discussion of transference.

[229] As ON *æsi-* is an intensifying particle and the noun *holmr* (m) principally applied to islands or hills which rise as islands out of a body of water or marshy ground (Indl:56-7), this would actually give a fairly improbable and unparalleled 'very island'!

NSL:102 'Esefjorden'). According to Jakobsen (1936:38), the ON noun **esja* (f) is used in Shetland and Orkney place-names to indicate a flakey blend of steatite and harder stone. While this exact meaning would not be expected in Islay, the general character, *ie.* volcanic rock, might be. This can be compared with the mountain-name Essja, to the immediate north of Reykjavík in Iceland. In *Kjalnesinga saga* we are told that the specific element in Icelandic Esjuberg derives from Esja, the name of a legendary Irish woman who is said to have made her there. As Pálsson (1996:10-11) explains, however, the ethnic background of Esja is a clear indication that her name and hence the placename supposed to be derived from it was regarded as strange and unusual.

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Kilnave [ˌkɪ:l ˈne:v]

Killneave by the generall rentall and by Rentall 1644 should pay £94, 6s. 8d., which is less than the present rent by £33, 4s. 4d.' (1722)

NR 283 731

Kineaw (1631) *Keilnew* (1686) *Kilneave; Killneave* (1722) *Kilnave* (1733) *Killnave* (1741) *Kilnave* (1749) *Killneave* (M)

Etymology: G *cill (f)* + (ON *nef* (n))

While Thomas' (MS) offering of G **Cille an Naoimh*, 'Chapel of the saints', is lexically possible, it clashes with written forms and local pronunciation. Watson's (1926:307) suggestion of G **Cill Nèimh*, with the dedication being to an unspecified St Nem, seems more reasonable. That the personal name Nem might have been current in pre-Norse Islay is potentially attested by its presence in the *Senchus fer nAlban* (Dumville 2002:202 §24, 27). While not discounting this possibility, however, Maceacharna (1976:30, 53) prefers to link it with the Ros Deorand of the *Senchus* (which he translates as 'the Pilgrims promontary'); the element **nave* in this and several other local place-names; and the ancient Celtic name 'nemeton' often associated with sacred places (*cf.* Watson 1926:244-50). If this were the case, the specific in the names Kilnave, Ardnave and Eilean Nave could be seen as a survival from the Iron Age or even earlier. But while Maceacharna, like Watson before him, was right to link the etymologies of Kilnave, Ardnave and Eilean Nave, there is no need to go quite so far back to find a plausible interpretation.

The key to the etymology of all three names lies in the shape of the Ardnave promontory. At high tide, this headland juts out into the sea like a nose or a beak – a fact that would be clearly visible to anyone sailing past to the N. Given the trend we have already seen for ON nature-names to be adapted into Gaelic by the prefix of an effectively tautaological G generic, in this case G *àird*, it seems likely that **Nave* derives from ON **Nef*, 'nose, beak' – used figuratively of the shape of the headland. According to Rygh (NG 13:23) ON *nef* is commonly used of 'jutting points' in Norwegian place-names. It is this usage we find in the farm-names Nebbe, Nebbeness *etc.* in SW Norway (NG). It can also be found with a similar meaning in the Faroes' northern Isles (Matras 193:217) and Shetland (Jakobsen 1936:85).

Associations:

Brecacha, ??zow, Kineaw, Garrviez Mc?uri?th (1631) *Keandrochead, Ardnave, Breakauchie, Mergidill, Killnave* (1741)

Antiquities:

The medieval **chapel** at **Cill Naoimh**, measuring *c.* 11m E-W by *c.* 6.1m externally over walls approximately 0.9m thick, closely resembles the 12th century St Oran's chapel on Iona (RCAHMS 1984:219). However, the **Early Christian high cross**, which stands several metres from the door in its W wall is thought to date from the 8th century (NRMS:NR27SE 1.00) – suggesting continuity of resort to this site for at least 400 years. The **burial ground** (NRMS:NR27SE 1.01) contained in the chapel's enclosure is still in use today.

The **crannog** in **Loch Laingeadail** [ˌlɔːx ˈlɛŋɡə.d̥ɤ̆ɬ / ˌd̥oːx ˈlɛŋɡə.d̥ɤ̆ɬ] (NRMS:NR27SE 27) is adjacent to Killneave. The loch itself appears to have been named for an ON **Langadal*, 'longdale' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:79). 'Langadal' *etc.* is extremely common in Norway (*cf.* NR I:330: NR II:344-5; NR III:271). Jónsson (1907-15:519), notes a Langidalr (*litli – stóri*) in Iceland (XIII). **Casach Loch Laingeadail** flows NE from the loch into Loch Gruinart.

Context:

While there is a permanent stream linking Kilnave to the sea via Loch Gruinart, the most practical and direct access to the open sea is found at **Tràigh Nòstaig** *c.* 2.6km to the N (see notes on Ardnave above).

Slèidmeall (51m) lies *c.* 1.5km to the WNW and **Mùirnemeall Beag** (56m) approx. 1.5km to the NNW (see notes on Breakachey above).

Garra Eallabus is approx. 1km to the S, on the south bank of **Allt Gàradh Ealabais**. While the *ex nomine* onomastic unit **Eallabus* appears to contain the ON generic *bólstaðr*, what the specific might be is not so clear. Maceacharna (1976:85) suggests ON **Hjallabólstaðr*, 'the farm on the ridge'. But see notes on Eallabus in Kilarrow parish for further discussion.

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Kindrochid [ˌkʲɪn ˈd̥rɔ.xɪd̥ʒ]

NR 232 687

Kindrokit (1507) *Kendrokyt* (1509) *Kindrocheid* (1541a) *kindrocheid* (1541b) *Kendrochat* (1562) *Kendrochat* (1563) *Kendrycht* (1584) *Kindrocheid* (1614) *Kindroheid* (1627) *Keandrochad* (1631) *Keandrohaig* (1654) *Kindraheid* (1662) *Kindrochead* (1665) *Keandrochead* (1686) *Kendrocheid* (1722) *Keandrochead* (1733) *Keandrochead* (1741) *Kandrochid* (1749) *Kandrochit* (M)

Etymology: G *ceann* (m) + *drochaid* (f)

From G **Ceann Drochaid*, 'bridge end' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:119), referring no doubt to a prominent piece of civil engineering somewhere in the vicinity.

Associations:

Schannagangrig et Kindrokit (1507) *Sanangrangreg et Kendrokyt* (1509) *Keandrochad & ane kowland calit Artorius* [alterius?] (1631) *Keandrochead and Keanchyllan* (1686) *Smqill and Kendrocheid* (1722) *Keandrochead, Mergadill, Ardnave* (1733) *Keandrochead, Ardnave, Breakauchie, Mergidill, Killnave* (1741)

Antiquities:

RCAHMS (1984:310) lists an '**island dwelling**' in Loch Còrr adjacent to the Kandrochit shore.

Context:

The farm buildings at Kandrochit are *c.* 2.3km SSE of **Sanogmore Bay** (see below); *c.* 2.65km ENE of **Tràigh Flèisgein Bheag** and 3km NE of **Tràigh Flèisgein Mhòr** (see notes on Ballinaby above). In addition to this, the name **Braigo** [ˈb̥raʔɪ.g̊o] is associated with a small settleement about 600m NNW of Kandrochit and about 350m S of the supposed remains of the chapel at Cill Ronain (NMRS: NR26NW 2), near the border with Sanogmore as illustrated on MacDougall's map.

Figure 70: Braigo from the S

Given the surrounding expanse of very gently undulating land, it seems unlikely that this name derives from G *bráighe*, 'upper part' or 'brae' (Gillies 1906:150). While Maceacharna's (1976:79) oxymoronic suggestion of ON **Breiðgjá*, 'broad ravine', must be rejected as a compound, the likeliehood that ON *breiðr* was the specific is nevertheless high. A more convincing derivation of the specific would

be ON *gata* (f). Although the primary meaning of this noun is 'road, way', it is also a relatively common generic in Norwegian farm-names. A search for '%gata' on NG returned 68 hits. While there are no direct parallels for Braigo in Norway, Jakobsen (1936:45) lists a Bregoda Shetland.

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Leckgruinart [ˈliːhk ˌgruːñiaɹt / ˈleːxk ˌgriːñiaɹt]

NR 277 692

Leackgrunzeard (1686) Leachgrunard (1722) Leckgrunart (1733) Leekgrunart (1741) Leckgruinart (1749) *Leekgrunart* (M)

Etymology: (ON *lækr* (m)) + (ON *grunn* (adj) + *fjörðr* (m))

Leckgruinart is a conflation of the neighbouring farm-names Leek and Gruinart in the same way that we also find Carnglassans, Cultorsa *etc.* It must therefore post-date the creation of its two constituent parts.

Antiquities:

The **fortified island** in **Loch An Fhir Mhoir** is approx. 1.3km to the W (NRMS:NR26NE 4)

Context:

Garra Eallabus is approx. 1.1km to the NNW, on the south bank of **Allt Gàradh Ealabais** (see notes on Eallabus in Kilarrow); and **Rhudha Luidhneis** about 1.5km to the ESE (see notes on Corsapool above).

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Leek [ˈliːk or ʎiːxkʲ]

NR 223 678

'Leak, Sannaigbeig, Granniard, and Cospellen, being 3 quarters and ane auchtenpart, being the best land in the wholl countrie, wadset to Ballanabie for 7500 marks. It is a very beneficial wadset' (1722)

Leik (1507) *Leike* (1509) *Lek* (1541a) *Lek* (1541b) *Lek* (1562) *Lek* (1563) *Lek* (1584) *Leck* (1614) *Leck* (1627) *Leack* (1631) *Leck* (1662) *Lack* (1665) *Leack* (1686) *Leack* (1722) [NOT 1749] *Leek* (M)

Etymology: ON *lækr* (m)

ON **Lækr* (m), 'brook, rivulet' (*cf.* Thomas MS), in reference to the River Leoig which appears to form the E boundary of this farm district. Jónsson lists 8 examples of Lækr in Iceland (IV, V (2), VI, VII, XIII (2), XVI).

Associations:

Foreland. Lek (1541a) *Foreland. Lek* (1541b) *Foreland, Leck* (1614) *Small, Leack and Megarne* (1631) *Leack, Sannagbeg, Keanchyllane in Machoroshinis, Grunard, and Corspallane* (1686) *Leack, Sannaigbeig, Grannard, and Caspellen* (1722)

Antiquities:

The **dun** at **Carnduncan** is approximately 1km to the SW (NRMSNR26NW 21).

Context:

Tràigh Flèisgein Bhèag lies approx. 2.45km to the WSW; **Tràigh Flèisgein Mhòr**, *c.* 2.7km to the SW (see notes on Ballinaby above).

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Lossit in Rhinns ['lo:siʤ / 'do:siʤ]

'Losset a good quarter land, alike good for sowing and pasturage, and is down of the rent £71, 3s. 8d.' (1722).

NR 185 563

Lossite (1507) *Lossyt* (1509) *Losset* (1541a) *Losset* (1541b) *Lossaide* (1562) *Lossaid* (1563) *Lossid* (1584) *Lossat* (1627) *Losset* (1631) *Loset* (1654) *Losset* (1662) *Lossitt* (1665) *Lossat* (1686) *Losset* (1722) *Lossett* (1733) *Losset* (1749) *Lossit in Rins* (M)

Etymology: G *losaid* (f)

Thomas suggests derivation from G **Losaid* meaning 'kneading trough' and relating to the attested fertitlity of the land (*cf.* Gillies 1906:152). According to Joyce (1922:430), *losaid* used figuratively in this sense is relatively common in the place-names of the northern, Irish counties. As Olson (1983:140-1) points out, however, a number of other 'Lossit's in the Scottish Isles are associated with bodies of water – including a Loch Losait in Skye, a bay called Losit on the W coast of Kintyre and another, known as Losaid, on the isle of Canna. As a result, it seems just as likely that the allusion here is to the occasionally turbulent body of water to the W of this holding.

Associations:

Ard et Lossite (1507) *Losset and Ardunlane* (1541a) *Losset and Ardunlane* (1541b) *Lossat et Ardunllane* (1627) *Losset and Ardunlem* (1631) *Losset et Ordmillan* (1662) *Lossitt Ardmillan* (1665) *Lossat and Ardinlame* (1686)

Antiquities:

There is an anonymous **dun** approx. 1.2km to the W of the present day farm buildings, not far from the strategically important Lossit Point (NMRS:NR15NE 2). Several hundred metres to the NW, on the Point

itself, is the promontory **fort** of **Dùn na Faing,** 'the fort of the cattle fold', separated from the mainland by a contoured stone wall some 60m long (NRMS:NR15NE 3). In addition to this, the **fort** of **Dùn Bhoraraig** [ˌd̥uːn ˈvɔ.raʔriɡ̊ʲ] is situated approx. 1.2km to the WNW, on the coast and close to the boundary with Tormastill (NRMS:NR15NE 14).

The name of this last structure merits further attention. While the coinage is G, the onomastic unit 'Bhoraraig' is clearly derived from the ON elements *borg* (f) and *vík* (f), 'fort' and 'bay' resp. Interestingly, the the ON **Borga(r)vík* in question is not directly indicative of the fortifiaction, but rather a nearby natural feature – an ON *–vík* which had itself been named for the *borg*. There is, however, a problem here. The fort of Dùn Bhoraraig is situated at the head of Geodh Dùn Bhoraraig [ˈd̥ʒɔʔɔ. ˌd̥uːn ˌvɔʔraʔriɡ̊ʲ], a long, narrow sea-inlet on the south side of Rubha na Faoileige. While this name could be seen as an effectively tautological construct, traceable through two steps to a now lost *Borga(r)vík*, it refers to a topographical feature which is unlikely to have attracted the generic *vík*. Just over a kilometre to the south, however, is Lossit bay. This name is clearly not Norse, but with three conspicuous Iron Age fortifications in the vicinity there is a possibility that it replaced an earlier, Norse *Borga(r)vík*, 'the Bay of the Forts'. If this were the case, the name *Dùn Borga(r)vík* may have been coined to emphasise the most impressive or significant of these three forts by speakers of G drawing on a pre-existing ON nomenclature.[230]

While the element 'borg' is relatively common in Norwegian place-names – with a search for 'borg%' returning 235 hits on NG – compounds such as **Borgarvík etc.* are few and far between. In Iceland, however, there are several examples of *Borgarfjörður*, including the substantial sea-inlet to the S of Skallagrímr Kveldulfsson's famous steading at Borg (*cf.* Pálsson and Edwards 1976:73-4).

Context:

Lossit Burn flows in an E-W direction through an increasingly deep valley into **Lossit Bay**. The present day farm buildings are situated at the top of the northern bank of this valley approx. half a kilometre to the WNW of the dunes.

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[230] It is interesting to note that Lossit in Kilmeny parish also sports a *Bhoraraig. (*cf.* Maceachama 1976:117).

Nave Island [ˌiʔləʔ ˈneːv]

NR 292 758

Ilanardnaw (1507) *Ylan Ardnawe* (1509) *Ellan nefe* (1549) *insulum de Ardnew* (1588) *Ylen Naomh/ Ylen Ardnaw* (1654) *Anrdneave, and the island thereof* (1722) *Island Knave* (1749) *Island Neue* (M)

Etymology: G *eilean* (m) + [ON *nef* (n)]

This island-name appears to derive from the attachment of G **Eilean* 'island' to a pre-existing ON **Nef* 'headland' (see notes on Kilnave above).

Associations:

Anrdneave, and the island thereof (1722)

Antiquities:

Although the island's ruinous **chapel**, measuring *c.* 8.55m E-W by 5.9m externally over walls *c.* 0.9m thick, was heavily repointed and used for industrial purposes in the 19th century, its earliest architectural characteristics appear to date from the 13th century. The fragment of what may have been an **8th century cross carving** discovered in the vicinity of the chapel suggests that the site was already of some importance in the Early Christian period (NRMS:NR27NE 1). Whether it remained an important ecclesiastical centre throughout the Norse period, is, however, difficult to say.

The possible remains of a 'Viking' settlement consisting of the turf covered founds of a barrel shaped building measuring *c.* 22.5m by 10m have been found at NR 2913 7593, *c.* 90m from the sea. As no excavations have been undertaken to verify the provenance of this structure, it is currently impossible to say whether it dates to Viking Age or 19th century kelp processing activity (NMRS:NR27NE2).

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Nerabus [ˈnɛːrə.b̥ɯs / ˈnɛːrə.b̥ʌs]

'Nerabols a good tenement' (1722)

NR 226 551

Arrobollis (1507) *Arrobollis* (1509) *Nerrabollsadh* (1588) *Norobollis* (1614) *Nerobollis* (1627) *Nearbols* (1631) *Eÿrbols* (1654) *Nereboth* (1662) *Nerobolls* (1665) *Newbolsidie* (1674) *Nerabollis* (1686) *Morabulfadtie* (1695) *Nerabols* (1722) *Nerabolls* (1733) *Nerebolls* (1741) *Nerabols* (1749) *Nerabolls* (M)

Etymology: ON *neðri* (adj) OR ON *eyri* (m) + *bólstaðr* (m)

Thomas' (MS) suggestion of ON **Knarrarbólstaðr*, 'the farm of the merchant ship', seems to confuse ON pronunciation with that of modern English. Whereas the /k/ in intial /kn/ is usually silent in English, it is and was pronounced as an unvoiced stop in the Scandinavian languages. As this feature appears to be absent from the local pronunciation and all recorded written forms of the name, Thomas' etymology must therefore be discarded. The ON **Neðri-bólstaðr*, 'lower steading', suggested by Gillies (1906:234; *cf.* Maceacharna 1976:77) appears to be supported by the presence of a **Bolsay**, from ON **Bólstaðr*, on modern OS maps some 1.9km to the N and 50m further up the. However, the complete absence of early references to this Bolsay raises serious doubts as to its antiquity and its socio-economic relationship with Nerabus. Gammeltoft (2001:138-9) further disputes the idea of a spatial relationship between the two on philological grounds. He argues, that ON /ð/ would not normally be lost or assimilated in the cluster /ðr/ but merely changed as in modern Norwegian *nedre* to /d/ – preferring to see the specific as ON *nærri*, the comparative form of the adjective 'close', albeit without explaining what this signifies. But this cannot, be accepted. A search for 'neðri%' on NG, reveals numerous Norwegian place-names where ON /ðr/ has become /r/, including several postulated **Neðribýr* compounds which have become 'Nerby' in Smaalenenes and Kristians amt. While Gammeltoft's argument must therefore be discarded, there is another reason to doubt a spatial relationship between the names Nerabus and Bolsay.

Although it is generally assumed on the basis of the later written forms and local pronunciation that the initial phoneme in Nerabus is [n], it is significant that the earliest written forms begin with a vowel. This raises the possibility that the later, initial [n] is the result of the phonetic phenomenon known as projection (*cf.* Cox 2002:64) – the projection in this particular case resulting from the use of the G article *an* in conjunction with the stressed vowel initial syllable beginning **Erabus*. The likeliehood that the Norse form of this name had an initial vowel is heightened by the nearby but now lost farm-district of Erpheill.

Erpheill

NR UNKNOWN

Arrefeill (1541a) *Arrefeill* (1541b) *Arrastill (or Arrafield)* 1562 *Arrefeill* (1614) *Arrefeild* (1627) *Erphill* (1631) *Erueil* (1654) *Arefeild* (1662) *Areseid* (1665)[231]

While this name is now lost, Blaue's map of 1654 places 'Eueil' beside Nerabus in the Rhinns of Islay. Although this is most probably an ON *–fjall*, 'hill' or *–völlr* 'plain, field', name, the similiarity of its specific to that of the adjacent Arrobollis suggests that the two holdings may at one time have been part of the same farm-district. Given the decline of Erpheill but the survival of Nerabus and its wealth of ecclesiastical antiquities, it seems most likely that the prestige-centre in this district and inspiration for name coinage lay at Nerabus. While the male personal-

[231] NB: As it is clear from the context that the medial /s/ in this last example is an orthographic variant of /f/, *Areseid* should not be confused with *Areset* discussed under Coulabus in Kilarrow.

name Ari (NID:31-2) – which would give ON **Arafjall/ *Aravöllr* and **Arabólstaðr* – is possible, the location of the current farm-centre on Nerabus on the E banks of Abhainn Ardnish or in the vicinity of a raised beach might suggest an original ON **Eyra(r)bólstaðr*, 'the steading by the gravel bank'. Felatious word-division in post-Norse times following the extraction of the name from a G, definite context could conceivably have resulted in *An *Eyra(r)bólstaðr* becoming *A *Neyra(r)bólstaðr.*

Associations:

Cella Sancti Colume de Arrobollis (1507) *Cella Sancti Columbe de Arrobollis* (1509) *Norobollis and Coramonthie* (1614) *Nerobollis et Coramochie* (1627) *Glassame, Carmglassoir, Nearbols* (1631) *Nereboth et Coramichtie* (1662) *Nerobolls and Coramuchlie* (1665) *Nerebolls; Octofad and miln of Nerobollis* (1741)

Antiquities:

NMRS records two chapel sites in the vicinity of the Nerabolls farm-buildings; The ruins of a late medieval chapel **Nerabolls I**, measuring *c.* 13.9m E-W by 4.7m externally over walls approx 0.9m thick, are located near a series of ancient and modern graveyards approx. 200m to the South. While there are no written records of this chapel, local tradition associates it with St Columba. As the district of Nerabus is known to have been held by the Augustinian abbey of Derry until the 17th century (Chapter 7), it can be assumed that it was furnished with a chapel since the later Middle Ages at least. The remains of 11 cross slabs decorated in the style of the Iona and Oronsay schools have been found in and around this site. One of the adjacent burial grounds has also yielded a fragment of slab with what may be a 'marigold' symbol of the type normally dated to about the 7th century AD (NRMS:NR25SW 2). While this points to continuity of resort extending back into the Early Historic period, it does not, of course prove continuity of use or religious practise through the Norse period.

The ruins of a second, smaller chapel and burial ground of **Nerabols II** or **(Cladh) Cill Iain**, measuring *c.* 4.4m E-W by 2.7m internally with walls *c.* 70cm thick, lie approx. 250m to the NE of the farm buildings (NRMS:NR25NW 33).

Context:

The biggest and most sheltered landing place in the vicinity appears to be Port an Uisge *c.* 450m to the south. It is noteworthy that this bay is protected by the small headland of **Ardnish** [ˌaɾ̪d̪ ˈniʃ], a name which appears to derive from the effectively tautological addition of G *àird* to an existing ON **Nes* 'headland'. The river **Abhainn Ardnish,** enters the sea on the northern side of the promontory.

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Octofad [ˌɔx.kə ˈfaʔd̥ə]

NR 219 545

Ouchtofad (1507) *Ochtofad* (1509) *Tochtowfade* (1541a) *Tochtowfade* (1541b) *Octoforda* (1562) *Octofadda* (1563) *Ochtofad* (1631) *Tontufadda* (1654) *Octofadda* (1584) *Tochtofad* (1614) *Tochtoufad* (1627) *Tochtofad* (1662) *Ochtofad* (1665) *Ochtofad* (1686) *Octafade* (1722) *Octofad* (1733) *Octofad* (1741) *Octofad* (1749) *Ochtofad* (M)

Etymology: G *Ochdamh* (adj) + *fada* (adj)

G **Ochdamh fada*, 'the long eighth', with 'eighth' being a unit of extent (*cf.* Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:92; Gillies 1906:153; see Chapter 8). The 'extent' of this farm-district in the early rentals was 1/8th or 16s. 8d.

Associations:

Ouchtofad et Ochtocladesell (1507) *Ochtofad et Ochtocladsell* (1509) *Girgadill and Ochtofad* (1631) *Glenfansay, Allisteretroch, Illestickareauch, Belliegowrie and Ochtofad* (1665) *Octofad and miln of Nerobollis* (1741)

Antiquities:

The remains of a **dun**, **An Dùn**, are located approx. 400m SSE of the farm (NRMS:NR25SW 3); with those of the **chapel** of **Gleann Na Gaoidh** and its graveyard (NRMS:NR25SW 1) being situated approx. 1.2km SW of the current farm buildings. The chapel itself appears to have been a simple clay-mortared structure with external measurements of 8m ESE-WNW by 5m over walls approx. 1m thick. Of the three **carved stones** found at this site, 2 are believed to date from the **Early Christian** period. One of these is a Celtic-ring cross in semi-relief with crosslets which has been dated on typological grounds to the 9th or 10th century, suggesting, if it has always been at this site, that the burial-ground, if not the chapel may have been in use during the Viking Age.

Maceacharna (1976:90 FN 11) suggests that the Norse name of the valley survives in the name of the cemetery on the opposite side from the chapel – Dirgeadail. While **Dirgeadail** certainly seems Norse, Maceacharna's interpetation of this as ON **Drygjudalr*, 'the valley of the dwarf woman', is difficult to accept. Derivation from ON **Digridalr*, 'the big valley', with metathesis of the /g/ and /r/ in the specific, would accord well with local topography – this is the most significant valley along this stretch of the coast. A search for 'digr%' on NG returned 21 hits, including a Dirdal in Stavanger amt, which Rygh derives from ON *digr* 'fat, big' and *dalr* valley'.

Context:

Ardnish and **Abhainn Ardnish** are both about 700m to the NE (see notes on Nerabus above). The names of the hills on the ridge inland from Ochtafad are discussed in the section on Kelsa.

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Octomore [ˌɔx.kə ˈmoːr]

NR 248 589

Octamore and the lands annexed therto in wadset being quarters and one lewrheis and a cowland; and has of mo[d] in wadset upon it 4500 merks, being a very good wadset, having a changehouse and malt kilne thereon' (1722)

Ouchtmor (1507) *Ouchtmor* (1507) *Ochtmoir* (1509) *Tochtomoir* (1541a) *Octomoir* (1563) *Octamoir* (1584) *Tochtomoir* (1614) *Tochtomoir* (1627) *Ochtomoir* (1631) *Ochtoumoir* (1654) *Tochtmoir* (1662) *Tochtomoir* (1665) *?Ortomoir* (1665) *Ochtomoir* (1686) *Octamore* (1722) *Octomore* (1733) *Octomore* (1741) *Oct(o)more* (1749) *Ochtomore* (M)

Etymology: G *Ochdamh* (adj) + *mor* (adj)

G **Ochdamh mor*, 'greater eighth', with 'eighth' being a unit of extent.(Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:92; Gillies 1906:53; see also Chapter 8).

Associations:

Ouchtmor et Garry (1507) *Ochtmoir et Gerre* (1509) *Tochtomoir. Garremoir. Garrebeg Tochtomoremissay Gremissay* (1541a) *Tochtomoir, Garremoir, Garrebeg, Tochtomoirmissay, Gremissay* (1614) *Tochtomoirmissay* (1627) *Ochtomoir, Elistra, adeveill (sic.)* (1631) *Garrobeg, Orthomoir, Missay, Gremissay and Clagenauch* (1665) *Ochtomoir, Cultorsay, Lorgba, Grymsay, Gylin and Dowdilmore* (1686) *Octamore, Cultorsa, Lorgba, Grimsa, Dudilmore, and Gaylin* (1722) *Octomore, Grimsey, Coultersay & Lergba, Dudellmoir, Gylyne, Changehouse, malt-kilne, and Miln of Skibo* (1741)

Antiquities:

Octamore is about 850m to the W of the alleged **dun** site at **Rubh' an Dùin** (NMRS:NR25NE 3) (see notes on Glassans).

Context:

Ochtomore is situated *c.* 650m NW of **Port an Sgioba** (*ie.* Port Charlotte) (see notes on Glassans above).

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Olistadh [ˈoːlɪ.stɪɠʲ]

'Olisda a good convenient tenement' (1722)

NR 218 583

Olistife (1541a) *Olistefe* (1541b) *Oclisty* (1562) *Oclistee* (1563) *Oclistie* (1584) *Olistyse* (1614) *Olistyfe* (1627) *Olasda* (1631) *Clostiff* (1662) *Olostiffe* (1665) *Olidsa* (1686) *Olisda* (1722) *Olista* (1733) *Olissta* (1741) *Olistle* (1749) *Olista* (M)

Etymology: ON *Óláfr* (m) + ON *staðir* (m pl)

Derivation is likely to be form ON **Ólastaðir*, 'Óli's steading', or a similar compound built on another variant of the ON personal name Óláfr (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:77; Thomas MS).

NG lists 12 examples of Olstad *etc.* including 2 each in Akershus, Hedemarkens and Kristians amt and 1 apiece in Jarlsberg og Larviks, Nedenes, Romsdals, Stavanger, Søndre Bergenhus and Søndre Tronhjems amt. Rygh believed the specific element in all of these names to derive from the ON male personal names Óláfr or Óla. Although Jakobsen (1936:152) lists various Shetlandic place-names where the specific is likely to be ON Ólafr or Óli, there are no direct cognates for Olistadh.

Associations:

Carnglassany, Olissta (1741)

Context:

The nature names **Cnoc Breac Olistadh** and **Coille Olistadh** are nearby. **Beinn Tart a'Mhill** and **Gleann Tart a'Mhill** lie approx. 1.5km to the SSW (see notes on Kelsa above).

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Orsay [ˈɔːrə̆s'ei]

NR 163 515

oilen Eorsaigh (*c.* 1380) *Ilanorsa* (1507) *Oversay* (1549) *Ilandoursa* (1631) *Oversa* (1654) *Illandowrrsay* (1686) *Island Oversaw* (1741) *Isle Noresay* (1749) *Island Norsa* (M)

Etymology: ON *áróss* (m) + *ey* (f)

The larger of three islets lying just off the SW tip of the Rhinns of Islay is now known as Orsay. Although the majority of the early recorded forms of this name derive from a G *eilean* (m) or 'island' coinage, the initial 'oilen / Illan/ Island' *etc.* must be seen as a later addition to a pre-existing ON *Orsay. While the generic here is quite clearly ON *ey* (f), 'island', derivation of the specific has been a matter of some debate. The remains of a substantial medieval chapel on the island (RCAHMS 1984:255-6) led Maceacharna (1976:78) to suggest an ON rendering of the Gaelic saint's name Oran, with the terminal /s/ presumably representing the common ON masculine genitive morpheme. As can be seen from the Crown rentals of 1507 and 1509, however, the earliest and indeed only known dedication on Orsay was to Columba and not Oran. While it is not impossible that all traces of a previous dedication to Oran had been obliterated by the Norse, it seems more likely that the descriptive element is also intrinsically Norse.

Figure 71: Orsay from the North, flanked by the settlements of Port Wemyss, Portnahaven and Ballymeanach. Abhainn Gleann na Rainich is not visible.

Perhaps the best known ON etymology is Thomas' (MS) offering of *örfiri* (n) – giving the compound meaning of 'ebb or tidal island' (*cf.* Nicolaisen 1977-80:119). Even so, this interpretation appears to confuse the early forms of Orsay with those of Oronsay which are also recorded in the Islay material in conjunction with priory land-holdings (see below). It also fails to take proper account of local topography. While Oronsay off the SW coast of Colonsay is a tidal island, Orsay off the SW coast of the Rhinns is not and cannot therefore be an **Örfirisey* (*cf.* Gillies 1906:234-5).

Gillies (1906:234-5) suggests a number of poorly attested alternatives including ON *oðr*, 'a wood, woody', *orr*, 'a scar, a notch', and *óron*, 'mackerel'. An even better explanation, however, is provided by the name of a settlement on the adjacent mainland.

While the island of Orsay is small and relatively infertile by Islay standards, the farm-district of that name is nevertheless listed as a 16s. 8d. or Auchtenpart land in the early rentals. Considering the substantial 'extent' of this holding, it seems likely that at least some of it was located on the adjacent mainland. With this being the case, special attention can be drawn to the names of nearby places. While the current fishing village at Port Wemyss is comparatively recent – dating to the third decade of the 19th century (RCAHMS 1984:302) – settlement at this site is likely to be much older. Significantly, its previous Gaelic name of *Bun Abhainne* (Maceacharna 1976:122) means 'mouth of the river' – with the river in question, Abhainn Gleann na Rainich, virtually bisecting the southern end of the Rhinns. Given the local pronunciation of Orsay, with a clear vowel sound between the [r] and the [s], it is possible that the original form of the island-name was ON **Árössey*, 'the island by the mouth of the river', and that the name of the mainland settlement was ON **Áröss* – peserved in the Gaelic translation *Bun Abhainne*. The importance of Abhainn Gleann na Rainich in the local nomenclature is also commemorated in the name of the neighbouring settlement, Portnahaven, from G **Port na h-Abhainne* 'port of the river'.

Figure 72: Orsay and the mouth of Abhainn Gleann na Rainich from John Thomson's 1832 Atlas of Scotland

Farm-names derived from ON **Áröss* are not uncommon in Norway (Sandnes & Stemshaug 1976:358). *Norske Gaardnavne* lists 6 examples (2 in Akershus Amt and 1 each in Bratsberg, Buskerruds, Jarlsberg og Larviks and Stavanger amt), noting that the initial vowel is often transformed to /o/ by the operation of vowel assimilation (Rygh 1989:22). As Marwick (1952:184) observed that initial ON /ár/ becomes /or/ in Orkney, and Jakobsen (1936:18) that it becomes /or/ and /wor/ in Shetland it can be assumed that the initial /o/ [ɔ] in Orsay is indicative of the same phenomenon.

Associations:

Insula Sancte Columbe de Ilanorsa in Iley (1507) *Insula Sancte Columbe* (1509) *Kealsa, Killaglan and Ilandoursa* (1631) *Elistereyrarach, Illandowrrsay, Balladalie, Corieskallag* (1686) *Wester Elister, Balygawly, Archally and Island Oversaw, Easter Elister* (1741)

Antiquities:

Three fragments of an **Early Christian cross-slab** found on Orsay in 1959 may indicate Christian activity on the island in the 8th or 9th century (NMRS:NR15SE 1.00). They were found in the vicinity of a substantial, later medieval **chapel** measuring approx. 14.7m E-W by 5.4m externally over walls some 80cm thick. It has been suggested that this is the chapel of *oilen Eorsaigh* which John I, Lord of the Isles, is said to have roofed and furnished at some point prior to 1380 (RCAHMS 1984:256). There is, however, a clearly visible join line on the exterior of the N wall pointing to the extension of the original chapel by approximately 4.4m in the late 18th or early 19th century (RCAHMS 1984:255). While the burial ground was cleared to make a garden for the keeper of the light-house built in 1824-5 (RCAHMS 1984:254-6, 328-9), the mortuary house known as Hugh MacKay's grave still stands in the N corner of the chapel enclosure (RCAHMS 1984:256). Given the status of the MacKays of the Rhinns, a family of important land-owners said to be the MacDonald's 'lieutenants' in that district (Lamont 1966:28-9), it can be assumed that the chapel and burial ground on Orsay held some status themselves.

Context:

It was suggested by Maceacharna (1976:88) that the modern place-name **Am Ballan** [əm ˈb̥a?lən] in the SE of Orsay, is derived from ON *balinn*, the definite from of ON *bali* (m) meaning 'grassy bank'. While this is plausible, especially given the local topography (see Figure 71 above), we should probably see the construct as being in the dative case, giving ON **Balanum* rather than the accusative suggested by Maceacharna.

Forms pertaining to Oronsay

Sandak pertinens ad Ornisay (1507) *Grunart mortificata de novo monasterio de Ornisay per Maclane* (1507) *Skeak pertinens Ornyssay* (1509) *Grunnort mortificatum de novo per McCane monasterio de Ornyssay* (1509) *Howe 16s 4d land, and of this takin pertening to [the] abbey of Ornysay 8s 4d land* (1541a) (1541b); *How* [between *Kelsay* and *Lergby*] (1627)

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*Sanaig

Sanagmore [ˌsanɪg̊ʲˈmo:r]

NR 237 707

'Sannaigmore, a very good possession, is down of the generall rental £29, 5. 8d. and in Rental 1644 was 11 lib. 5 sh. more than the gerall rentall' (1722)

Superior Sandak (1507) *Aliud sandag* (1509) *Sandag* (1541a) *Sandag* (1541b) *Sandag* (1614) *Sandag* (1627) *Sannaik moir* (1631) *Sannaig* (1654) *Sandock* (1662) *Sandack* (1665) *Sannag Moir* (1686) *Sannaigmore* (1722) *Sanaigmore* (1733) *Sanaigmore* (1741) *Sanaigmore* (1749) *Sanogmore*

Etymology: ON *sandr* (m) + *vík* (f)

ON **Sandvík*, 'sandy bay', suffixed with later G *mór*, 'large, greater' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:79). According to NSL (268), 'Sandvik(a)' is a very common place-name in Norway. NG lists 5 farms known as 'sandvik(en)': 1 each in Bratsbeg, Kristians and Søndre Bergenhus amt and 2 in Nordre Bergenhus amt. In addition to this, Jakobsen (93:115) lists several examples of 'Sandwick' in Shetland; Marwick (1952:79;147;174) lists three in Orkney; Matras (1933:239) a 'Sandvíkar' in the Faroes' Northern isles; Jónsson (1907-15:510), 4 examples of Sandvík in Iceland (V, XIII, XVII, XXI) and Oftedal (1954:393), a Sandwick in Lewis.

Associations:

Superior Sandak pertinens eidem loco (1507) *Sandak pertinens ad Ornisay* (1507) *Aliud sandag pertinens dicto loco* (1509) *Sandag pertinens Ornyssay* (1509) *Sandag and Neanegane* (1541a) *Sandag and Meanegaine* (1541b) *Sandag and Neangane* (1614) *Sandag et Noangan* (1627) *Sandock et Nerringan* (1662) *Sandack and Neanange* (1665)

Antiquities:

The remains of the **burial ground** of Cill Ronain, consisting of a circular stone walled enclosure of *c.* 20m in diameter, are situated approx. 1km SSW of the farm buildings (NRMS:NR26NW 2). Whether these lay within the confines of 'Sanogmore' or 'Kandrochit' as shown on MacDougall's mapis, however, difficult to say.

The **Dun** at **Sanogmore** lies approx. 550m to the NW of the farm buildings (NRMS:NR27SW 1). The **dun** of **Port na Caillich** lies *c.* 2.05km to the ENE near the boundary with Breakachey (NRMS:NR27SE 21).

Three **forts** straddle the boundaries of Sanogmore and Sanogbeg: **Allt Nan Ba** (NRMS:NR27SW 13) lies *c.* 1.95km to the WNW; **Beinn a Chaistel** (NRMS:NR27SW 5), a

promontory fort, *c.* 1.7km in the same direction; and **Beinn Sholaraidh** (NRMS:NR27SW 12), another promontory fort, *c.* 1.95km to the WNW. As with the burial ground of Cill Ronain, it is difficult to say which farm-district had the closest association. It is possible that the name Beinn Sholaraidh, was created by the addition of G *beinn* 'hill, mountain' to ON * Sholaraidh, perhaps from ON **Sólærgi* 'sunny or sun-set shieling'. A search for 'sól%' on NG returned 163 hits. In most of these, the specific *sól* was thought to refer to sunny places or eminences behind which the sun would appear to set. Given that the promontory fort of Beinn Sholaraidh is separated from the mainland proper by the highest hill on this part of the coast (125m), it may have been regarded as either sunny or the point behind which the sun set by inhabitants of either Sanagmore or Sanaigbeg.

Context:

The farm buildings at **Braigo** are about 1.4km to the SSW (see notes on Kindrochid above).

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Sanaigbeg [ˌsanɪg̊ʲˈb̥ihkʲ]

NR 221 698

Schannagangrig (1507) *Sanangrangreg* (1509) *Sannage-beg* (1562) *Sannage Nagrek* (1563) *Samnagenagreg* (1584) *Sannaikbeg* (1631) *Sannagbeg* (1686) *Sannaigbeg* (1722) *Sanaigbeg* (1749) *Sanogbeg* (M)

Etymology: ON *sandr* (m) + *vík* (f)

ON **Sandvík*, 'sandy bay', with later G *beag*, 'little, lesser' (see notes on Sanagmore above). Although the spelling of the two earliest forms of this name appear puzzling, closer inspection suggest they may be the result of two simple typographical errors. The *Sanangrangreg* from 1509 in particular points to a careless scribe repeated the /angr/ section of the name, where the /r/ is a typo for /v/, before snapping too and finishing it off, thus giving *Sanangrangreg* when it should have been written **Sanangveg*.

Associations:

Schannagangrig et Kindrokit (1507) *Sanangrangreg et Kendrokyt* (1509) *Sannage Nagrek* (1563) *Leack, Sannagbeg, Keanchyllane in Machoroshinis, Grunard, and Corspallane* (1686) *Leack, Sannaigbeg, Grannard, and Caspellen* (1722)

Antiquities:

While the **dun** of **Dùn nan Nighean**, 'the fort of the maidens', lies approx. 1.25km to the SW (*cf.* NMRS:NR26SW 1), it is difficult to say whether it lay within the bounds of Sanogbeg or Smail as shown on MacDougall's map.

Three forts straddle the boundaries of Sanogbeg and Sanogmore: **Allt Nan Ba** (NRMS:NR27SW 13) lies *c.* 1.4km to the NNW; **Beinn a Chaistel** (NRMS:NR27SW 5), a promontory fort, *c.* 1.2km due N; and **Beinn Sholaraidh** (NRMS:NR27SW 12), another promontory fort, *c.* 1.3km to the NNE (see above).

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Smaull (South) [ˈsmɛʔəl]

NR 214 685

'Smail and Kindrocheid two very good quarter lands, but is a considerable dale down of the rent, which I cannot condescend upon, but refers to the generall rental: and hes a good park annexed unto it' (1722)

Smarle (1507) *Smaole* (1509) *Smawill* (1541a) *Smawill* (1541b) *Smawll* (1562) *Smawll* (1563) *Smaill* (1584) *Smalbill* (1614) *Smawill* (1627) *Small* (1631) *Smaali* (1654) *Sinavill* (1662) *Smavill* (1665) *Smaill* (1686) *Smaill* (1722) *Small* (1733) *Smail* (1741) *Smaal* (1749) *Smail* (M)

Etymology: ON *smjör* (n) + *völlr* (m)

None of the previous attempts to explain this name have been particularly satisfactory. As there is no terminal stop in any of the recorded forms, Thomas' (MS) suggestion of ON **Smalavik*, 'cattle/sheep bay', seems unlikely. Gillies' (1906:153) suggestion of 'N *smá* + *bhol* [presumably *ból*?], meaning 'small town', might seem like a reasonable approximation of the written forms, but is in conflict with the local pronunciation. And while the place of the missing medial stop for Maceacharna's (1976:78 & 90 FN 18) topographically appropriate ON **Smáhlið*, 'little cliff', might have been taken by the the glottal catch between the [ɛ] and the [ə], there are easier philological and topographical explanations.

The land surrounding the modern farm-centres at Smaull is not only flat, but comparatively dry and as such provides excellent pasturage (Figure 73). When this feature of local topography is considered alongside the written and spoken forms of the name, ON **Smjörvöllr*, 'butter vale', meaning 'pastureland', presents itself as the most likely etymology. ON *smjör* (n) is a relatively common element in Norwegian nature and habitative names, usually marking the positive qualities of the land in terms of suitability for pasture.[232] NG, for example, lists almost two dozen farms beginning with the element 'smør'.

[232] It has also been suggested that the element could also allude to the payment of tax in butter or the operation of heathen cult (NSL:288-9).

Interestingly, from the point of view of phonological development, Jakobsen (1936:118) derives 'de Smerwel park' in Shetland from ON **Smjörvöllr*. A broadly similar development in Islay, whereby an [ø] in the first syllable developed into an [ɛ] and the terminal [r] in the specific develops into a glottal stop, would explain the current pronunciation.

Figure 73: North and South Smaull from the S

A further possibility, raised by Marstrander's (1932:336) treatment of Manx Smeale, is ON **Smiðjuhóll*, 'the height of the smithy'. Given the lack of supporting evidence in the the case of Islay Smaull, however, such an interpretation would have to be considered speculative.

Associations:

Smawill, Kindcalyeane, Crumurd (1541a) *Smawill, Kindcalyeane, Crumurd* (1541b) *Smalbill, Kyndcalzeane, Crunvrd* (1614) *Small, Leack and Megarne* (1631) *Smaill and Kendrocheid* (1722)

Antiquities:

The **fort** of **Dùn nan Nighean,** 'fort of the maidens' (NMRS:NR26SW 1) lies approx. 1km NNW from the farm buildings at (South) Smail, as does the **dun** of **Dùn Bheolain** (NMRS:NR26SW 6) which is situated on the N bank of Poll An Dhubhaidh. Both are near the border of Smail with Sanogbeg.

Although the place-name **Fang Poll a'Chapuill**, G 'Cattle fold of the pool of the Chapel' *c.* 750m to the NW, suggests that there may have been a chapel in the vicinity, there are no records or material remains which might corroborate its presence.

The remains of the enclosed burial ground at Cladh Haco (NMRS:NR26NW3) lie *c.* 300 metres to the SSE of South Smaull, near the boundary with Balinaby. The natural spring of Tobar Haco (G 'Hakon's well') issues from the base of a rocky outscrop some 40m to the NW of the burial ground. Exactly which *Hákon* the graveyard and the spring were named for is not known. It is interesting to speculate, however, that this might have been Hákon IV Hákonarson, whose men are recorded in *Hákonar saga Hákonarson*, as having taken provisions from Islay under Uspak Hákon in 1230 and then again under Hákon himslef between August and October 1263 (ESSHII:471-8 at 475, 607-42 at 634-5). If so, comparisons could be drawn with Kyleakin, 'the strait of Hákon' (Forbes 1923:434-5), which separates the SE tip of Skye from the Scottish mainland.

Context:

The local place-names **Rubha Lamanais**, **Aird Thòrr-innis** and **Sgeir Mhór Aird Thòrr-innis** all appear to be built around pre-existing ON onomastic units. While Maceacharna (1976:78) derives the first of these from an overly complex ON **Hlað hamar nes*, 'piled up rock ness', prefixed with G *rubha* 'promontory', derivation from a simpler ON **Lambanes*, 'the promontory of the lambs', seems more likely (*cf.* NRI:328; NRII:342 & 3; NRIII:269; Jakobsen 1936:86:147; Marwick 1952:12; Jónsson 1907-15:492 (XVI)). It is conceivable that the lush green pastureland of this area, was used by local farmers for the rearing of lambs.

Aird Thòrr-innis (and by extension **Sgeir Mhór Aird Thòrr-innis**) is also likely to have Norse origins. While the final section of the onomastic unit **Thòrr-innis* could be interpreted as G *innis* (f), 'island', in reference to the rocky islet *c.* 900m to the SW of S Smail, the general pattern of effectively tautological constructions discussed under Kelsa and Kilchoman above, suggests that the prosthetic G *Àird* mirrors an earlier ON generic in Thòrr-innis, in this case *nes* (n), 'headland/ promontory'. What the specific element in this construct may have been is difficult to say (see, for example, notes on Cnoc Rhaonastil in Kildalton). Perhaps the most likely explanation, however, is ON **Þorfunes*, 'turf-ness, grassy ness', denoting an area from which turves were cut for housing (*cf.* Jakobsen 1936:108; Matras 1933:290-1).

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Sunderland Farm [ˈʃuʔnarʔtiŋ]

NR 246 645

Synerlay (1507) *Synarley* (1509) *Synnarland* (1541a) *Synnerland* (1541b) *Schynnerll* (1542) *Synnarland* (1614) *Schynnerl* (1615) *Skynneil* (1617) *Swnnerland* (1627) *Sunarlin* (1631) *Shinart* (1654) *Summerland* (1662) *Sumerland* (1665) *Sinderline* (1686) *Shinderline* (1722) *Sunderland* (1733) *Sunderline* (1741) [NOT 1749] *Sunderland* (M)

Etymology: ON *sjón* (f)/ *sjó* (f) + ON *land* (n)

The etymology of this name has been a matter of some contention. Maceacharna's (1976:78 & 90 FN17) offering of ON 'hinterland with Islay's prosthetic "s"', is interesting if somewhat vague. If the now lost farm-district of Meanland were taken to derive from ON **Meginland*, 'Main holding', its close association with Sunderland in some of the early rentals might suggest that the latter lay in its hinterland. The fact that Sunderland is by far the better attested, however, and patently more successful suggests otherwise. How this might reflected in the name 'Sunderland', is, moreover, not exactly clear. If the specific that Maceacharna had in mind was ON *undir* (adj) and it had been augmented with a prosthetic /s/, there would be some justification in terms of both topography and cognate examples for an earlier ON **Undirland*, albeit in a somewhat different sense.

A search for 'undir%' on NG returned 44 hits, including an Undeland in Nedenes amt and an Undirland in Akershus amt. While the specific element in the former example was seen as the female personal name Unnr, that in the later was interpreted as ON *undir*, referring to the location of the farm on the lower slopes, *ie.* 'under' an imposing hill. As will be seen from cursory analysis of OS explorer sheet 353, this accurately desribes the relationship of the current farm-centre on Sunderland to Sunderland Hill (130m).

While Thomas' (MS) suggestion of ON *Sjundaland*, 'Sjundi's farm', provides an easier and less fanciful match for the written forms, it suffers from a lack of cognate examples. Gillies' (1906:144) proposal that the specific element is ON *sjónar*, the gen. of *sjón* (f), 'view', is more plausible. Sunderland farm proffers beautiful and unimpeded vistas of Loch Gorm and partial views of the Atlantic Ocean to the W. A specific of *sjón* would also find cognates in Norway (*cf.* NSL:276-7 'sjona'). Gillies' explanation of the generic as G *lann*, 'enclosure', must be considered redundant when ON **Sjónarland* would provide an equally close approxiamtion of the written forms. Interestingly, however, local pronunciation, appears to preserve an entirely different generic.

Sunderland 'mound' from W

Sunderland 'mound' from N

Figure 74: Possible Norse assembly site on Sunderland farm

The [ˈʃuʔnarʔtiŋ] recorded in 2004 points instead to ON *þing*, 'assembly place' – a possibility supported by the form *Shinart* shown on Blaue's map of 1654. Following Gillies' suggestion for the specific would give an original ON **Sjónarþing*, 'the assembly place of the view'. Given the location of this holding, however, on the banks of Loch Gorm, it is tempting to postulate a specific of *sjóvar*, the gen. of ON *sjó* (f), lake, giving **Sjóvarþing*, 'the assembly-place by the lake'. The presence of a raised mound *c.* 1.4km to the WNW of the farm-buildings at Sunderland on the shore of Loch Gorm may be siginicant in this respect. While this mound has not yet been investigated by the RCAHMS, it could perhaps be compared to the mounds at Tynwald in the Isle of Man, Þingvellir in Iceland and various others, which are known to have formed the focal point of assembly sites in the Norse world (see notes on ON *þing* in Chapter 7).

If the pronunciation of this farm-name can be regarded as a legacy of an ON **Sjóvarþing*, it must be wondered why the majority of written forms differ so radically. One explanation might be the conflation

of a settlement-name **Sjóvarland* with a now lost district-name of **Sjóvarþing* (see discussion of *þing* in Chapter 7).

Associations:

(1509) *Synnarland. Coule. Meanland* (1541a) *Synnerland, Caule, Meanland* (1541b) *Synnarland, Coull, Meanland* (1614) *Kowle, Sunarlin, Foirland & ye Lowerheis of Ruachrmanlin* (1631) *Summerland* (1662) *Sumerland and Cowle* (1665) *Coull, Sinderline, Forland, Machirvealin and Cladavell* (1686) *Shinderline, Cuill, Masherrveolin, and Foreland, and Cladeveill* (1722) *Sunderline & c.* (1741)

Antiquities:

The remains of a possible **crannog** have been found on the shore of Loch Gorm (NMRS:NR26NW 16). Although the historic **castle** on **Eilean Mór** was several hundred metres out into the middle of Loch Gorm (RCAHMS 1984:282-3), it appears to have been closest to the farm-district of Sunderland, as illustrated on MacDougall's map. This location may also have housed fortification(s) during the Iron Age.

Context:

Sunderland Hill (130m) lies immediately to the S of the present farm buildings.

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Tormisdale [ˈt'ɔrm.ɪstɪg̊ʲ / ˈtɔrm.ɪsd̥ʌ̆ɬ]

'Tormisdill a good possession and down of the Rentall 1644 £28, 10s. 8d., and short of the generall rental the most of the small presents' (1722)

NR 193 587

Tornustill (1507) *Tormystule* (1509) *Dormistyfe* (1541a) *Dormistyfe* (1541b) *Tormystie* (1562) *Tormistie* (1563) *Dornustyff* (1614) *Dornowstyff [vel Stormistyff]* (1627) *Ormsa* (1654) *Darnostiff* (1662) *Darnostiffe* (1665) *Tormesdill* (1686) *Tormisdill* (1722) *Tormistell* (1733) *Tormistle* (1741) *Tormistle* (1749) *Tormastill* (M)

Etymology: ON *Þormóðr* (m) or *Ormr* (m) + *dalr* (m)

The generic here is almost certainly ON *–dalr* 'valley'. As per usual, however, the specific is by no means as certain. Maceacharna's (1976:77) suggestion of ON *Tormod's (*sic.*) *dalr*, with *Þormodr* being a male personal name (NID:1198-1200), is certainly plausible. While there are no Norwegian cognates, Marwick (1952) lists a Tormiston in Stennes parish, Orkney, which he interprets as ON **Þormóðsstaðir*. The operation of G grammar would also allow for ON **Ormsdalr* (*cf.* Gillies 1906:235; Thomas MS; see also Chapter 6) with *ormr* being used either as man's name (NID) or as a reference to serpents, either literally or figuratively (NSL:244) – a description that would accord well with the meandering path of Allt a'Ghlinne in the vicinity of the current Tormisdale farm-buildings. The valley itself is now known simply as *An Gleann*, G for 'the valley'.

While there are no cognates of the compound **Ormsdalr* in NG, Jakobsen or Marwick, the element *Ormr* is realtively common in Norwegian farm-names (returning 104 hits on NG). NR, however lists three examples of 'Ormdal(en)' in S Norway (NRI:437) and two more in the central part of the country (NRII:469). While Matras (1933:221) also lists an 'Ormadalur' in the Faroes' northern Isles, he stresses that the genitive form of the name precludes an 'ancient' coinage.

Associations:

Tormistle, Miln of Breakauchy (1741)

Antiquities:

None. However, the name of the hillside of Cnoc Chroisprig some 600m to the N near the boundary with Kilchiaran (see below) suggests that there may at one time have been a boundary cross in the vicinity (see notes on Kilchiaran above).

Context:

On modern OS maps, Tormisdale is bounded by two small farms, Carn to the Sw and **Fornisaig** ['fɔ:rnɪs'ɪg̊ʲ] to the SE. The second of these names, whose current form dates only to the 19th century, is shown on the 1878 OS 6 inch to the mile map as Thornisaig. Given the proximity of this settlement to Tormisdale and the likeliehood that they share the same specific, it seems that both were originally part of the same land-holding. While Macheacharna (1976:90 FN 16) suggests that this 'Thornisaig' should be equated with the elusive Torlissay listed in the older Islay charters, there is no convincing evidence that Torlissay was even in Islay (D. Caldwell pers. comm.). How, if at all, these names relate to Cnoc Thornisaig, some 4km to the ENE, is difficult to say (see notes on Coultorsay above).

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Torony [ˌt'ɔ:r rɔ:ñɪx]

NR 236 561

Corrannay (1562) *Torrenich* (1686) *Torronich* (1722) *Toronich* (1733) *Torronich* (1741) *Torronich* (1749) *Torronich* (M)

Etymology: G *tòrr* (m) + *raineach* (f)

G **Tòrr-rainich*, 'ferny hill' (Thomas MS; Gillies 1906:154). According to Jock Campbell (pers. comm.), the current farmer at Carn and Torony, the hill (68m) on this holding is still plagued by bracken.

Context:

The extremely open **Port Torony** is approx. 200m to the SSE. **Bolsa** is *c.* 1.2km to the NW.

2: KILARROW

Allalladh ['a:ɬalei]

NR 480 580

Allalay (1749) *Alelay* (M)

Etymology: ON *áll* (m) + *leiti* (n)

Maceacharna (1976:111 & 113) suggests derivation from G **Àlaidh*, which he interprets by analogy with Al Clut – the Brythonic name for Dumbarton (Rock) – as 'Rock Place'. On superficial analysis of the local topography, this seems unlikely. The area around Allalladh is not only rock-free, but thanks to its calcareous bedrock and fertile soils, host to a large expanse of lush natural pastureland. It is for these qualities and their value in the transhumance economy that we see Allalladh associated with the lower-lying farm-district of Nosebridge in the 18th century (see below). It should be noted, however, that approx. 1.5km to the E of Allalladh, on the E bank of Loch Allallaidh, the gently sloping hillside gives way dramatically to the barren ridge of exposed quartzite peaks comprising Am Màm (329m), Maol nan Gobhar (429m) and Glass Beinn (472m). It is possible that this ridge is the 'Rock Place' suggested by Maceacharna's etymology. But for this explanation to work would require repetition of his suggested initial *àl*. And despite Maceacharna's assurances that this kind of reduplication is relatively common (1976:111), it is not repeated in any of the other farm-names on MacDougall's map.

Considering the very prominent ridge and the unobstructed views it offers to the W and the E, it is perhaps more likely that Allalladh has its origins in ON **Álaleiti*, 'look-out ridge' with the medial /a/ representing a svara bhakti vowel inserted to ease pronunciation (Chapter 6). While there do not appear to be any exact cognates for this compound in Norway or the Northern Isles, both the specific and generic elements are relatively common. In Norwegian place-names, ON *áll* (m) is most commonly encountered in the figurative sense of 'spine' or 'ridge' (Indl:41). Although ON **leiti* generally means place with a good view (NSL:213), Rygh has identified two variations on this theme: 'a place from which one can see a long way, such as in a valley where the river follows a straight course with no elevations blocking the view'; or 'an elevation affording an unobstructed view in two directions' (Indl:65). The latter would be most applicable in the case of Allalladh in Islay. This need not necessarily mean that the name began life as the designation for a farm. With no suitable cognates, it must be assumed that original appellative usage was of the ridge itself, with the name being transferred at a later stage to the adjacent patch of high quality arable.

Associations: *Allalay a Pendicle of Nosebridge* (1749) *Alelay a Pendicle of Nosebrig* (M)

Antiquities:

The remains of a **ring fort** occupy an island in **Loch Allallaidh** (NMRS:NR37NE 4).

Context:

Sruthan Allallaidh runs past to the S and **Loch Allallaidh** is about 1km to the E. **Maol a'Chatadail** lies approx. 1.5km to the ON (see notes on Cattadale below).

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Ardlarach ['aɫ.d̥rax]

'Ardlarich is a tolerable good possession, very good for stock and exposed to much improvement in sowing' (1722)

NR 293 586

Ardlarauch (1507) *Ardlarach* (1509) *Ardlaurauch* (1541a) *Ardlaurauch* (1541b) *Ardlarach* (1562) *Ardlarach* (1563) *Ardlaroche* (1584) *Ardlaurach* (1614) *Ardlaurach* (1627) *Ardlarach* (1631) *Ard Larach* (1654) *Ardtarrach* (1662) *Ardlarach* (1665) *Ardlarach* (1686) *Ardlarich* (1722) *Ardlaroch* (1733) *Ardlaroch* (1741) *Ardlarrach* (1749) *Ardlorauch* (M)

Etymology: G *àird* (f) + *làrach* (f)

Thomas (MS) suggests G **Àrd Làrach*, 'high site of a building or ruin' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:114). Considering that the highest point within 1.5km of the present farm-buildings is only 30m OD, however, which is significantly lower than on some of the adjacent farm-districts, it seems more likely that the generic here is G *àird*, 'promontory', referring to the triangular projection known as Rubha an t-Sàile which juts into Lochindaal to the immediate N of the farm-buildings.

Associations:

Laggane, Dowauch, Ardlaurauch, Corrare, Ilaneynnusk (1541a) *Laggane, Dowaurauch, Ardlaurauch, Corrare and Ilaneynnuisk* (1541b) *Laggane: Together with the fishings of Laggane, Dowawch, Ardlaurach, Corrare and Ilanynmusk* (1614) *the other half [of Glengaddill], Delilun, Kynegarie, Laggan, Donach, Ardlarach, Corrurre and Ilanamusk* (1665) *Ardlarach, Cruech* (1686) *Ardlaroch and Cruach* (1741)

Context:

Grunnd Loch [No phonetics] *c.* 1.35km to the SSW, appears to contain the ON adj *grunnr* with the topographically appropriate meaning of 'shallow'. Whether this represents the partial translation of a Norse name into G or the borrowing of ON *grunnr* into the local G dialect and name-giving traditions (*cf.* Stewart 2004:410) is impossible to say. It should be noted, however, that the place-names Grunnevatnet, Grunntjörn *etc.* are extremely common in Norway (*cf.* NR I:176-7; NR II:183-4; NR III:151).

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Avinlussa [ˌavɪŋ ˈɬʌsa]

NR 351 581

Awanlassay (1562) *Awanlassay* (1563) *Affanlessey* (1584) *Avanluska* (1631) *Awinlossor* (1686) *Avinlussa* (1722) *Averlusse* (1733) *Averlussa* (1741) *Avinlussa* (1749) *Avinlussa* (M)

Etymology: G *abhainn* (f) + (ON *lax* (m) + *á* (f))

Maceacharna (1976:113) sees this name as ancient, preserving the memory of a fertility godess, 'Lussa', whose name is reflected in the plant name 'lus'. A far more straightforward explanation, however, would be to see the onomastic unit 'lussa' preserving a formally primary ON *–á* or 'river'-name. While Gillies (1906:155) sees the specific as ON **Lys-á*, 'light river', this form is difficult to reconcile with the standard ON adj. *ljóss* 'light, bright' (*cf.* Zoëga 2004:276). Thomas' suggestion of ON **Laxá*, 'salmon river', on the other hand, merits further investigation.

Although the watercourse which flows past Avinlussa farm-buildings is now known as the River Laggan, it is clear from Blaue's map, that at least this part of it was previously called 'Avon Lysa' (1654). Early references to the *piscaria de Lessane* (1507, 1509) show that fishing took place on this river. Later, more specific references to the 'salmond fishing of the water of Laggan' (*cf.* 1541, 1686, 1695) suggest that the most valuable stock in it is likely to have been salmon and that the specific element in the onomastic unit 'Lussa' is in fact ON *lax* (n), 'salmon'. Such an interpretation finds further support in Dean Monro's (2002:309) 1541 account of 'ane river callit **Laxan** whereupon mony salmond are slane' and the '**Avinluska**' recorded in 1631 which appears to show metathesis of the phonological components, [k] and [s], of orthographic /x/. The terminal 'ane' of the early written forms might also represent the ON enclytic article, in either the accusative 'na' or dative 'nni', giving **Laxána* or **Laxánni*, with an extended meaning of 'by or at the Salmon River'.

In Norway, place-names derived from ON **Lax-* indicate a local abundance of salmon (*cf.* NSL:198-9). In addition to the hundreds of nature-names beginning *laks- etc.* recorded in NR, NG lists farms named Luksefjeld in Bratsberg amt, Laksevaag in Søndre Bergenhus amt, and Løksen in Tromsø amt. Jakobsen (1936:195) also lists a Lakso burn in Yell, Shetland; Matras (1933:195) a *Laksará* in Strond, in the Faroes' northern isles; and Oftedal (1954:401) a Laxay in Lewis.

Context:

The farm-buildings at Avinlussa lie on the north bank of **River Laggan**; **Allt na Tri-dail** is about 650m to the S (see notes on Avinvogy below). **Cnoc Amanta** (55m), G *Cnoc*, 'the hill', + ON *á(r)mót* '[by the] confluence of rivers' (*cf.* notes on Almond in Kilchoman), lies *c.* 1km to the ENE at the confluence of rivers Kilennan and Laggan.

The summit of **Cnoc Crò a' Mhàil** [ˌkrɔ:xk ˈkro: ə ˌva:ɬ] (95m) is approx. 1.55km to the NE of the farm buildings. While this is a G construct, the onomastic unit 'Crò a' Mhàil' appears to derive from a formally primary ON *-fjall* or 'hill' compound. Although Maceacharna (1976:82) implies derivation from ON **Hraunafjall*, meaning 'rough hill', ON **Gráfjall*, 'grey hill', seems equally likely. Both agree with the topography of the hill, which is rocky and greyish in colour. It may be significant, however, that while NR lists only two examples of 'Raunefjellet' (NR II: 489),[233] the compound 'Gråfjellet' is far more common, with dozens of examples listed across all parts of the country (NR I: 183; NR II: 193; NR III:155).

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Avonvogie (Farm) [ˌavɪŋ ˈvoʔg̊ʲiʔ]

NR 360 563

Avanvogie (1631) *Awinboggie* (1686) *Avinogy* (1733) *Avenvogie* (1741) *Avenvogy* (1741) *Avinvogie* (1749) *Avinvogy* (M)

Etymology: G *abhainn* (f) + *bogaidh* (adj)

G **Abhainn Bhogaidh*, 'river of the muddy/boggy place' (Maceacharna 1976:114). The previous bogginess of this farm-district is demonstrated by the large coniferous plantations which currently flank the farm-buildings.

Associations:

Keilcallumkeill, Torra & Avanvogie (1631) *Talent and Awinboggie* (1686) *Skerrols and Avinogy* (1733) *Balulve, Nether Stensha ½, ½ Skerrols and Avenvogie, Upper Stunsha* (1741) *Skerrols and Avenvogy* (1741)

Context:

Avinvogy farm is situated on the west bank of **Allt na Tri-dail** [ˌaɬt nə ˈtri:ˌd̥ăɬ]; *c.* 1km to the NW of **An Tri-dail**; and 1.5km to the NW of **Cnoc na Tri-dail**. Although Maceacharna (1976:113) tentatively derives the onomastic unit 'Tri-dail' from an unspecified G compound meaning 'three fold division', just exactly what that division might have been is difficult to gauge. One guess would be the location of the hill or the ruins of An Tri-dail on the border of Avinvogie, Avinlussa and Lower Killenan; another that it refers to the point where Allt na Tri-dail intersects River Laggan. Neither, however, is particularly satisfactory.

[233] Jónsson (1907-15:539) lists a farm called Hraunfell in Iceland.

Given that the fields at An Tri-dail lie on the S bank of the valley from which Allt na Tri-dail emerges at Avonvogie, it seems more likely that we are dealing with an ON *-dalr* or 'valley' compound. The stretch of remnant woodland between An Tri-dail and Avinvogie points, moreover to a specific of ON *tré* (n) 'tree' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:113). NG lists 3 Norwegian examples of Tredal/ Trædal (one in each of Lister og Mandals, Nordre Bergenhus and Romsdals amt) (*cf.* NSL 320) – with numerous others in NR, either as formally primary names or onomastic units in formally secondary names. According to Rygh, the name **Trédalr* often signifies the quality of woodland on the farm (NG XIII:395). Considering the inland location of An Tri-dail and the shelter the valley provides from the prevailing wind and salt-spray from the sea, it is conceivable that the trees here were once of a higher quality than those of the surrounding areas (*cf.* notes on Kilennan below).

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Ballitarsin [ˌbalɪˈtar.sɪŋ]

NR 355 611

Balletersyne (1507) *Balletersyn* (1509) *Balletarssin* (1541a) *Balletarssin* (1541b) *Balletersene* (1545) *Balletarsint* (1558) *Ballecarsint* (1562) *Ballietarsunt* (1563) *Balletarssint* (1584) *Balletarsyne* (1614) *Balletersin* (1627) *Balletarsin* (1631) *Bellietassin* (1662) *Ballietessan* (1665) *Ballatarsin* (1686) *Balletarsine* (1722) *Balytarsin* (1733) *Balitarsin* (1741) *Balitarsin* (1749) *Ballytarson* (M)

Etymology: G *baile (m)* + *tarsuinn* (adj)

G **Baile Tarsuinn*, 'the township on the slope' (Maceacharna 1976:114). Taking the current farm-buildings as a centre point, the slope here rises 30m over *c.* 225m from NW to SE.

Associations:

Scabballs and Ballietessan (1665)

Antiquities:

There is a low, turf covered mound some, measuring 11.3m E-W by 4.8m, some 500m to the SW of the present farm-buildings. This has been interpreted by RCAHMS as the remains of a **chapel**. There are, however, no traces of an enclosure (NRMS:NR36SE 8).

Context:

The **River Sorn** is about 1.3km to the NNW (see notes on Surn below); and **Cnoc Oshamail** less than 2km to the ENE (see notes on Daill below).

Barr ['ba:r]

NR 391 608

Bar (1499) *Bar* (1507) *Bar* (1509) *Bar* (1541a) *Barr* (1541b) *Bar* (1562) *Bar* (1563) *Barr* (1584) *Bar* (1614) *Bar* (1631) *Barr* (1662) *Bar* (1665) *Barr* (1686) *Barr* (1722) *Barr* (1733) *Barr* (1741) *Barr* (1749) *Barr* (M)

Etymology: ON *Barð* (n)

Although G **Bàrr*, meaning '[hill] top' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Gillies 1906:189) is a good match for the written forms, it is hardly consistent with the location of the current farm-centre in a long, broad-bottomed valley. Given the absence of suitable G alternatives, it seems more likely that the name is ON. Macheacarna (1976:82) suggests that it should be interpreted alongside a group of nature-names some 2km to the N including Beinn Bharra-dail (178m), Allt Loch Bharra-dail and the Loch Bharradail from which it flows. Although these constructs are clearly G, the onomastic unit 'Bharradail', which is common to all three, appears to derive from an earlier ON *–dalr* or 'valley' compound.

That the valley in question forms a stretch of the eastern border of Kilarrow and Kilmeny parishes, with Loch Bharra-dail itself straddling the local boundaries of 7 of the farm-districts on MacDougall's map,[234] suggested to Maceacharna (1976:82) that the derivation was from ON **Markadalr*, 'the valley of the boundaries or borders'. He suggested, moreover, that the name Barr had been extracted from this compound in the post-Norse period through a process of folk-etymology. While a connection between these four names seems reasonable, this particular derivation assumes syncope or assimilation of [k] which is not usually encountered in ON – G adaptations (*cf.* Henderson 1910).

Common derivation from an ON river-name, such as **Bera* 'the carrier' (*cf.* NSL:66 'Bardal') might have been possible in reference to the Barr River. Whether this is or was a 'carrier' of silt or other material, however, was not possible to ascertain. As Barr was one of the largest farms in the vicinity of the conspicuous ridge of hills running from Cnoc Donn (182m) in the SW to Beinn Bharra-dail (178m) in the NE, perhaps an even more convincong solution is ON **Barð* (n) meaning 'brow or ridge'. Jónsson (1907-15:531) lists four simplex examples of Barð in Iceland (XVI, XVII, XIX, XX); Matras (1933:66) one simplex example in the Faroes' northern isles; Jakobsen 1936:22 several compound examples and the simplex de Bard in Shetland; and NG a 'Baret' in Romsdals amt which Rygh interprets as ON **Barð*. Considering the prominent location of Beinn Bharra-dail in the ridge, it is possible that this reflects a now lost ON **Barðadal* 'the valley facing the ridge'. Attention can be drawn here to the district name Bardu in Troms., Norway. According to SNL (p.66) this appears to derive from an earlier Bardudøl valley-compound and ultimately from ON **barð*. Interpretation as '*lang og bratt fjellside mot ein dal*' (long and

[234] These are: Dail in Kilarrow; and Knocklerock, Kilmeny, Teervagin, Eiskinish, Ariquary and Ardochy in Kilmeny.

steep mountainside facing a valley) would certainly be applicable to the *Bharra-dail in Islay, where the average gradient of the valley's western slope often exceeds 25%.

Associations:

Bar, Storegag, Aregoware (1499) *Stinschaw, Bellolae and Bar* (1665)

Context:

Barr River flows past the farm buildings some 250m to the NE; **Maol a'Bharra** is approx. 2km to the ESE; **Cattadale River** about 400m to the S; **Maol a' Chatadail** *c.* 2km to the ESE (see notes on Cattadale below); and **Cnoc Oshamail** is *c.* 1.65km to the WNW (see notes on Daill below).

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Carrabus (Mid-) [ˈkʰaːrəˌbɯs]

'Carabols a good possession for sowing' (1722)

NR 314 639

Gararbollis (1507) *Gararbollis* (1509) *Carrabollis* (1509) *Carapols* (1541a) *Carrapols* (1541b) *Garbole* (1542*) *Garbollis* (1617) *Carrapols* (1627) *Carabols* (1631) *Karabol* (1654) *Carabollis* (1686) *Carabols* (1722) *Caraballs* (1733) *Caraballs* (1741) *Carabus* (1749) *Carabus* (M)

Etymology: ON ?*Garði* (m) + *bólstaðr* (m)

While this is clearly an ON *–bólstaðr* name, interpretation of the specific element is open to debate. Most analysts, including Thomas (MS), Maceacharna (1976:85), Gillies (1906:225) and Gammeltoft (2001:107) favour derivation from ON *kjarr* (n), 'copsewood, brushwood', with Gammeltoft explaining the terminal vowel as a svarabhakti added to ease the pronunciation of an otherwise difficult consonant cluster (*cf.* Chapter 6). While there is a possibility that Carrabus was once covered in the type of boggy scrub-woodland signified by this specific in Norwegian place-names (Indl:60), ON *kjarr* is not a particularly good match for the early forms or local pronunciation. These point instead to the man's name Garði or possibly ON *garðr* (m), 'enclosure' both of which could lead to **Garðabólstaðr*. While there are no exact cognates for this compound, both Garði and *garðr* are well-attested elsewhere in the Norse expansion zone (Indl:51; NSL:121-2).

Associations:

Garbollis et Duache (1617) *Kinabols, Allabols, Carabols* (1631) *Carabus, Knockdon & Blackrock* (1749)

Antiquities:

The ruins of the **dun** of **Borraichill Mór** [ˌbɔrəxiːl ˈmoːr] lie approx. 900m to the NNW of the Mid Carrabus farm buildings (and within 1.2km of W & E Carrabus), separating the holding from those of

Coullabus and Corsapol (NRMS:NR36SW 6). While the dun is clearly named for the hill, Borraichill Mór (91m), on which it rests, it is clear that this in turn is derived from a Norse original, perhaps **Borgarfjall*, 'the hill of the fort' (but see also notes notes on Artalla in Kildalton). **Borichill Crotach** is nearby. NR lists 6 examples of Borgafjell *etc.* in southern and central Norway (NRI:46; NRII:49).

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Cattadale ['kahtə$_{|}$d̥ɤ̆ɬ]

'Cattadill is down of the rent £16, 8s. 8d.' (1722)

NR 386 601

Cattadull (1545) *Cattadull* (1558) *Cattadell* (1614) *Cattadell* (1627) *Catadill* (1631) *Caltadell* (1662) *Cattadale* (1665) *Cattadill* (1686) *Cattadill* (1722) *Cattadill* (1733) *Catadell* (1741) *Cattadale* (1749) *Cattadill* (M)

Etymology: ON *köttr* (m) + *dalr* (m)

The most likely derivation of this name is ON **Kattadalr*, 'the valley of the cats' – either literally (*cf.* Thomas; Gillies 1906:226; Maceacharna 1976:82)[235] or as a tribal name (Maceacharna 1976:82; See also notes on Ballychatrigan).

NR (II:289; III:229) lists several examples of 'Kattedalen' *etc.* in Norway, which could be interpreted as 'the valley of the cats'; and Jónsson (1907-15:520) one example of Katadalr in Iceland (XV). Marwick (1952:81), on the other hand, interprets the Cattaby in Deerness, Orkney as 'the farm of a man called *Káti* or *Köttr*'. Likewise, Rygh, in his NG discussions of farm-names which begin **kat*, such as Kaatarud in Buskeruds amt, suggests that the element might also be seen as **kotara*, gen of **kotari* (m), 'one who inhabits a *kot*, small farm' (by analogy with *þorpari* from *þorp*); the man's name *Kati* (although the first attested use of this name comes from Danish sources of the 15th century); or the by-names *Kátr*, 'cheerful' or *Köttr* (m) from 'cat'.

If the specific element in Islay's Cattadale were derived from ON *Káti*, **kotari*, *káti* or *kötr*, we would expect the vowel sound in the first syllable to be long. The fact that it is short, is more consistent with an ON **Kattadalr*.

Associations:

Cattadale and Storgag (1665)

[235] Although there do not currently appear to be any wild-cats in Islay, feral populations have been recorded in the vicinity of larger rabbit warrens (Ogilvie 2003:64).

Context:

The farm buildings are located on the S bank of **Cattadale River**. **Maol a'Chatadail**, G the bare hill(side) of 'Cattadill', is approx 2km to the ESE; **Cnoc Oshamil** is approx. 1.7km to the NW (see notes on Daill below); and the **River Laggan** just over 600m to the E (see notes on Laggan below).

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*Cill Bhraenan [ˌkʲil ˈvrɛːnə̆n]

NR 374 623

Kilbranne (1494) *Dalkilkilbrarne* (1507) *Kilbranan* (1509) *Kilbreran* (1509) *Kilveranane* (1541a) *Kilweranane,* (1541b) *Killelbrenan* (1562) *Kilwrannane* (1563) *Kilwranan* (1584) *Kilveranane* (1614) *Kilveranane* (1627) *Kilbrannan* (1631) *Kilveransay* (1662) *Kilveranan* (1665) *Kilbranan* (1686) *Kilbrannan* (1722) *Kilbranan* (1733) *Kilbranan* (1741) *Kilbranan* (1749) *Killbranan* (M)

Etymology: ***cill*** **(f) +** ***Braenan*** **(m)**

G **Cill Bhraenan*, the 'chapel of St Brandon the Voyager' who died in AD 577 (Watson 1926:274; Maceacharna 1976:52).

Associations:

Skanlastill, Kynbeloquhane, Capolse, Robolse, Litil Capolse, Kilbranne, Dulloch, Ochtownwruch, Arrevore, Correre, Curloch et Alane Mackindow, in insula de Ila (1494) *Dalkilkilbrarne, Ouchinfreich* (1507) *Dal Kilbranan et Ochtinfrich* (1509) *Kilveranane, Delowauch* (1541a) *Kilweranane, Delowach* (1541b) *Kilveranane, Delowauch* (1614) *Dallochtonafeych, Kilbranan, and Surne* (1686) *Daill, Octonafreitch, Kilbrannan, and Surn* (1722) *Dale, Surn & Kilbranan* (1733) *Dale, Surn and Kilbranan* (1741)

Antiquities:

The probable site of the **chapel** of Cill Bhraenan, is now obscured by the ruins of the township with the same name (RCAHMS 1984:193)

Context:

Beinn Bharra-dail, Allt Loch Bharra-dail, Loch Bharradail and the associated **crannog** are all within 2.2km to the ENE of the ruins of Kilbranan (see notes on Bàrr above). **Cnoc Oshamail** (175m), lies about 750m to the S (see notes on Daill below).

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Corr Airidh/ Corary [kɔr̥ ˈaːri]

NR 312 571

Correre (1494) *Corozen* (1507) *Corraren* (1509) *Corrare* (1541a) *Corrare* (1541b) *Karray* (1562) *Corraray* (1563) *Corrary* (1584) *Corrare* (1614) *Corrare* (1627) *Corrareis* (1631) *Korrary* (1654) *Corarie* (1662) *Corrurre* (1665) *Corrarie* (1722) *Correry* (1733) *Corrary* (1741) *Corrary* (1749) *Corary* (M)

Etymology: Uncertain: (G *corr* (f) + *àirigh* (f)) OR (ON *Kári* (m) + *ærgi* (n))

G **Corr àirigh*, 'the sheiling on the round hill' (Thomas MS; Gillies 1906:14,19 & 155) or 'the shieling on the slope' (Maceacharna 1906:116). Both of these are consistent with the presence of Corary Hill (30+ m) some 350m to the NNW.

It should be noted, however, that the specific-generic word order in this name is unusual in Gaelic, suggesting that it could in fact be a Norse coinage containing the ON generic *ærgi* (n), 'shieling'. As Marwick (1952:141-2) lists a Corrigill in Harray, Orkney – which he derives from the personal-names Kárr or Kári or an old stream-name – it is tempting to speculate that Corary in Islay is derived from ON **Káraærgi* 'Kári's shieling'.

Associations:

Skanlastill, Kynbeloquhane, Capolse, Robolse, Litil Capolse, Kilbranne, Dulloch, Ochtownwruch, Arrevore, Correre, Curloch et Alane Mackindow, in insula de Ila (1494) *Ilylan et Corozen* (1507) *Ylan et Corraren* (1509) *Laggane, Dowauch, Ardlaurauch, Corrare, Ilaneynnusk* (1541a) *Laggane, Dowaurauch, Ardlaurauch, Corrare and Ilaneynnuisk* (1541b) *Laggane: Together with the fishings of Laggane, Dowawch, Ardlaurach, Corrare and Ilanynmusk* (1614) *Corrare et Iylairnynnuisk* (1627) *Corarie et Ilanamusk* (1662) *the other half [of Glengaddill], Delilun, Kynegarie, Laggan, Donach, Ardlarach, Corrurre and Ilanamusk* (1665)

Context:

Corrary Hill lies about 350m to the NNW; the **River Laggan** flows past approx. 200m to the S; and **Torr a'Bhreitheimh** lies *c.* 750m to the NW (see notes on Laggan below).

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Curlach [ˈkuːrə̆lax]

'waist' (1686); 'Curalach is doun of the rent' (1722)

NR 328 567

Curloch (1494) *Kuralach* (1562) *Kowralach* (1563) *Curralàche* (1584) *Curriolach* (1631) *Curralach* (1686) *Curralich* (1722) *Curaloch* (1733) *Curoloch* (1741) *Curralach* (1749) *Curiloch* (M)

Etymology: G **Currach* (m) + *lach* (f)

Macheacharna (1976:117) suggests G **Cùrlach*, 'gravel place'; and Thomas' G **Currach lach*, 'a place abounding in ferns or marshes'. While both are, or are likely to have been, topographically accurate descriptions of a farm-district which stradles the banks of the river Laggan, the latter is possibly a better reflection of the earlier forms.

Associations:

Skanlastill, Kynbeloquhane, Capolse, Robolse, Litil Capolse, Kilbranne, Dulloch, Ochtownwruch, Arrevore, Correre, Curloch et Alane Mackindow, in insula de Ila (1494)

Context:

River Laggan runs past immediately to the S (see notes on Laggan below).

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Daill [ˈd̥aɬ]

'Daill, Octonafreitch, Kilbrannen, & Surn a good wadset, the mod. on it being 5000 merks; wadset to Colin Campbell of Daill; the most of it lying exposed for good improvement' (1722)

NR 363 657

Dalkilkilbrarne (1507) *Dal* (1509) *Dalbeg, Dalmoir* (1541a) *Dalbeg, Dalmor* (1541b) *Dal* (1542*) *Dalbeg, Dalmoir/ Dall* (1614) *Dall* (1615) *Dall* (1617) *Dalbeg, Dalmoir/ Dall* (1627) *Dall* (1631) *Dalbeg, Dalmoir/ Dall* (1662) *Dalbeg, Dalmor* (1665) *Dallochtonafeychn* (1686) *Daill* (1722) *Dale* (1733) *Dale* (1741) *Daill* (1749) *Dail* (M)

Etymology: ON *dalr* (m)

Maceacharna (1976:80 & 103) assumed on the basis of this farm-districts 16th and 17th century associations that it must have been the 'meeting place' of the pre-Norse territorial unit of 'Freag' (see Chapter 8) and thus derived from G **An Dàil*, 'focal-point, place/ chief centre' (*cf.* Jaski 2000:54). Although the use of G *dàil* in this sense is rare in Scotland, where usage tends to signify 'river meadow' (*cf.* Nicolaisen 1976:28), the proximity of Islay to Ireland and therefore exposure to Irish usage, may have had some bearing on local onomastic practise. As was seen in Chapter 8, however, there is little

convincing evidence that the names of the territories in the Senchus or their administrative focal points survived the island's Norse period. In fact, as the current farm centre at Daill sits on the gently sloping N bank of the Daill River in a conspicuous offshoot of the Sorn valley, it seems more likely that derivation is from ON **Dalr* 'valley'.[236]

Simplex nature names of this type are often associated with prestigious settlements in other parts of the Norse expansion zone (Chapters 4 and 7). According to NSL (p.89), 'Dal' *etc.*, from ON *dalr*, is an extremely common name in Norway – with NG listing dozens of simplex examples, usually in oblique and definite form. Simplex cognates can also be found in Iceland (Jónsson 1907-15:518); Shetland (Jakobsen 1936:6 & 62); the Faroes' northern isles (Matras 1933:87-8); and Orkney (Marwick 1952:67,128,163 & 179), where the old forms are usually 'Deall'. In addition to this, Oftedal (1954:374 & 377) lists a Dalebeg and Dalemore in Lewis, which derives from ON *dalr*, most probably in the dative from *dali.*

Associations:

Dalkilkilbrarne, Ouchinfreich (1507) (1509) *Dalbeg, Dalmoir and Gorthe* (1541a) *Dalbeg, Dalmor et Gorthe* (1541b) *Dal* (1542*) *Dalbeg, Dalmoir, and Gorth* (1614) *Dalbeg, Dalmoir et Gorth* (1627) *Dalbeg, Dalmoir et Gorth* (1662) *Dallochtonafeych, Kilbranan, and Surne* (1686) *Daill, Octonafreitch, Kilbrannan, and Surn* (1722) *Dale, Surn & Kilbranan* (1733) *Dale, Surn and Kilbranan* (1741)

Antiquities:

The **dun** of **Dùn Bruichlinn** lies approx. 1.1km to the NNE on the border with Eiskinish (NRMS:NR36SW 4).

Context:

The **Daill River** runs past the farm-buildings to the S; and the **River Sorn** *c.* 800m to the NW (see notes on Surn below). **Beinn Bharraidail** (178m) lies *c.* 2.5km to the E (see notes on Barr above); and **Cnoc Oshamail** [ˌkrɔ:xk ˈɔ:ʃəmʌ̆ɬ] about 1.5km to the SW. Although this last construct is clearly G, the onomastic unit 'Oshamail' appears to reflect an earlier ON *–fjall* or 'hill' compound. The specific is not so easy to identify. One possibility is ON **Eystrafjall*, 'the easternmost mountain (in the district)' – which would accord well with its position in region known since later medieval times as Kilarrow.[237] Although NR lists only one example of 'Østerfjellet' in Norway (NR II:748), there are half a dozen examples of the modern reflexes 'Aust(re)fjell(et)' *etc.* (NR I:12; NR II:14; NR III:13 & 14), with many dozens more place-names in Norway containing the element 'Austre/ Øster' *etc.* A second, albeit less likely alternative is to see the specific in Oshamail as a form of ON *áss* (m), meaning 'ridge' or the more enigmatic 'Esja' – thought in other parts of the Norse expansion zone to refer to the characteristics of the local stone (*cf.* discussion of Gleann Osamail in Kilchoman, Kilchoman).

[236] Thomas (MS) suggests ON *dæl* (f), 'little valley'.
[237] The former parish status of this region does not preclude origins in an earlier territorial division (see Chapter 8).

Dluich [ˈd̥luːix]

'Dluch and Gertaentaillworie a very good possession for holding and sowing' (1722)

NR 358 622?[238]

Dulloch (1494) *Delowauch* (1541a) *Delowauch* (1614) *Delevauch* (1627) *Dluach* (1631) *Delevauch* (1662) *Delevauch* (1665) *Dluach* (1722) *Delouach* (1733) *Delouach* (1741) *Dluich* (1749) *Dluich* (M)

Etymology: G *dlùbh* (adj) + *faiche* (f)

A compound of G *dlùbh*, 'close, near' and G *faiche*, 'field' (Gilles 1906:146). The presence of an Allt Dluich some 300m to the SW of Cill Bhraenan suggests that the proximity of this field was to Kilbranan, with which, in addition to Daill, it appears to have formed a compact group of land-holdings.

Associations:

Skanlastill, Kynbeloquhane, Capolse, Robolse, Litil Capolse, Kilbranne, Dulloch, Ochtownwruch, Arrevore, Correre, Curloch et Alane Mackindow, in insula de Ila (1494) *Kilveranane, Delowauch* (1541a) *Kilveranane, Delowauch* (1614) *Gortengillymorie, Dluach, Stelriauch* (1631) *Dluach and Gertaentaillworie* (1722)

Context:

The **River Sorn** flows past less than a kilometre to the NW (see notes on Surn below).

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Duich [ˈd̥ɯːʔix]

'Duach a good quarterland, very good for stock, with a conning warrant belonging to it' (1722)

NR 319 545

Dowoch (1507) *Dowoch* (1509) *Dowauch* (1541a) *Dowaurauch* (1541b) *Dowach* (1542) *Dowch* (1562) *Dowath* (1563) *Dovache* (1584) *Dowawch* (1614) *Duach* (1615) *Duache* (1617) *Dowauche* (1627) *Duauch Nether* (1631) *over Duauch* (1631) *Dowach* (1654) *Dawauch* (1662) *Donach* (1665) *Dowachis, Over and Nather* (1686) *Duach* (1722) *Duoch* (1733) *Duock* (1741) *Duich* (1749) *Duich* (M)

Etymology: G *dubh* (adj) + *faiche* (f)

[238] The name of this farm-district is no longer extant. Although comparison of MacDougall's map with the modern OS 1:25,000 Explorer sheets suggests that Dluich occupied much the same location as Gortanilivorrie (i.e. NR 358 622), the presence of an Allt Dluich about 1.3km to the E of this (and c.300m to the SW of the ruins of Cill Bhraenan), suggests either that the holding was previously more extensive than it appears on MacDougall's map or centred on a point further to the E. While the association of Dluich with 'Kilveranane' in the rentals of 1541 and 1614 appears to favour the latter hypothesis, its association with 'Gertaenaillworie' in 1722 supports the former. For ease of spatial comparisons, it will be assumed that latter day Dluich occupied the same location as Gortanilivorrie.

From G **Dùbhfhaiche*, meaning 'black meadow' (Maceacharna 1976:117; Gillies 1906:156; see notes on Island below for further discussion of the element *dubh*).

Associations:

Dowoch et Kilcallumkile (1507) *Dowoch et Kilcalumkill* (1509) *Laggane, Dowauch, Ardlaurauch, Corrare, Ilaneynnusk* (1541a) *Laggane, Dowaurauch, Ardlaurauch, Corrare and Ilaneynnuisk* (1541b) *Laggane: Together with the fishings of Laggane, Dowawch, Ardlaurach, Corrare and Ilanynmusk* (1614) *Garbols et Duach* (1615) *Garbollis et Duache* (1617) *Lagan, Duauch Nether* (1631) *Laggan and over Duauch* (1631) *the other half [of Glengaddill], Delilun, Kynegarie, Laggan, Donach, Ardlarach, Corrurre and Ilanamusk* (1665) *Dowachis, Over and Nather* (1686) *Duock, Stranabodauchq* (1741)

Antiquities:

In 1958 and 1959, a wide selection of artefacts ranging from a barbed and tanged flint arrowhead to a George II penny were recovered from an eroding sand-dune at **Cruach Mhor** at NR 307 544, some 1.1km to the W of Duich. These included grave goods from a suspected **Viking burial** consisting of two oval brooches, one bead of blue glass, two of jet, a stone spindle whorl and an iron sickle and shears. The nature of the goods suggests that the occupant of the grave had been female and buried some time in the 9th or 10th century (NMRS:NR35SW 1; Gordon 1991:157).

Context:

The **Duich River** flows past several hundred metres to the N.

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Eallabus [ˈjaʔɬa.ʊ̯ʊs]

NR 336 632

Allabollis (1507) *Allabollis* (1509) *Allabols* (1588) *Aelabols* (1588) *Allabols* (1631) *Ellabols* (1654) *Allabollis* (1686) *Alabols* (1722) *Eolobolls* (1733) *Eolobolls* (1741) *Ealabus* (1749) *Alabus* (M)

Etymology: ON *áll* (m) + *bólstaðr* (m)

While Maceacharna (1976:85) suggests ON **Hjallabólstaðr*, which he interprets as 'the farm on the ridge' (but *cf.* Indl:55), there do not apear to be any particularly conspicuous ridges in the vicinity. Similarly, while Gammeltoft (2001:110) suggests derivation from the ON noun *áll* (m) in the sense 'deep valley', this is hardly applicable to the very broad and gently undulating part of the Sorn valley occupied by Alabus. That is not to say, however, that ON *áll* should be completely discounted as a source for the specific. Given the current abundance of eels in both the Eallabus burn and nearby Loch Skerrols (J.

Campbell pers. comm.), ON *áll* in the sense of 'eel' seems like a reasonable explanation (*cf.* discussion of Ålesund in NSL:356).

It must be wondered whether this holding was previously linked to **Gárradh Eallabus** on the west bank of Loch Gruinart. According to Gammeltoft (2001:110), the 15km of land and water which seperates the two makes this unlikely. However, as similar relationships between farm-districts and their outlying 'pendicles' are known from elsewhere on the island (such as Nosebridge and Allallaidh) there is no reason why the owners or tenants of the low-lying, arable lands at Eallabus could not also have controlled shieling lands on the west bank of Loch Gruinart.

Associations:

Kinabols, Allabols, Carabols (1631) *Ellabols* (1654) *Kinabollis and Allabollis* (1686) *Kinnabols and Alabols* (1722) *Eolobolls* (1733) *Eolobolls, Miln of Killarow, Knockens* (1741) *Ealabus* (1749)

Context:

The present farm buildings are located on the S bank of **Eallabus Burn** some 500m SW of the point where it flows out of **Loch Skerrols** (see notes on Skerrols below); *c.* 1km to the NNW of **Cnoc na Daill** (see notes on Daill above); and slightly less to the **River Sorn** (see notes on Surn below).

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Eorrabus [ˈjɔːrəˌbʊs]

NR 359 646

Ourebulsche (1499) *Robolls* (*sic.*) (1507) *Orobollis* (1509) *Orepols* (1541a) *Orepols* (1541b) *Eurobolsay* (1562) *Ewrobolsay* (1563) *Ewrabolse* (1584) *Karobols* (1631) *Oriepols* (1665) *Earrbolls* (1722) *Eorobols* (1733) *Eorobolls* (1741) *Eorabus* (1749) *Yorabus* (M)

Etymology: ON *efri* (adj) + *bólstaðr* (m)

While clearly an ON *–bólstaðr* name, there have been some doubts as to the specific. Most analysts have preferred ON *eyri* (f), 'gravel beach or bank' (*cf.* Macheacharna 1976:85; Gillies 1906:227; Thomas 1882:256). But as Gammeltoft (2001:114-15) points out, this is unlikely. Not only are there no such features in the vicinity of the farm, but the settlement is more than three kilometres from the sea. He derives the name instead from ON *Efribólstaðir*, 'upper farm', on the basis of early forms and by analogy with similar forms in Orkney.

Associations:

Ourebulsche, Eskillis (1499) *Eskillis et Robolls* (1507) *Erskillis et Orobollis* (1509) *Orepols. Dowdilmoir* (1541a) *Orepols, Dowdilmore* (1541b) *Keappols moir, Keappols beg, Kayean, Karobols, Keirreishlaich, Balola, Duaskir, Ballemertine* (1631)

Context:

River Sorn flows past *c.* 500m to the SE (see notes on Surn below); and **Abhainn Ath a' Mharchaichd** *c.* 600m to the NW (see notes in Balole in Kilmeny parish).

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Gartachossan [ˌgaɾtəˈxɔsɛn]

NR 344 609

Gartocossyne (1507) *Gartacossyn* (1509) *Gartequhossin* (1541a) *Gartequhossin* (1541b) *Gartachossanta* (1562) *Gartchowsinta* (1563) *Garttachosanta* (1584) *Gartequhossin* (1627) *Cartchossin and Gonan* (1631) *Cartna choishanta* (1654) *Gartochosan* (1665) *Gartechossan* (1662) *Gartchossin and Goyne* (1686) *Gartachossen* (1722) *Upper Garthossen* (1733) *Nether Garthossen* (1733) *Upper Gartahossen* (1741) *Upper Gartahossen, Nether Gartahossen* (1741) *Gartachosan* (1749) *Gortachosan* (M)

Etymology: G *gart* (m) + *a* (art) + *casan* (m)

Thomas' (MS) suggestsion G **Gort a'chosnamh*, 'the field of the battle' is possible. However, Gillies' (1906:156) G **Gort a'chossan*, 'the field of the footpath' (*cf.* also Maceacharna 1976:100) is perhaps more plausible, both morphologically and on account of the medieval drove-road shown intersecting this farm-district on MacDougall's map.

Associations:

Cartchossin and Gonan (1631) *Gartochosan, Killesallan and Kairsay* (1665) *Gartchossin and Goyne* (1686)

Antiquities:

The **fort** of **Bridgend** on Cnoc na Dail (NMRS:NR36SW 24) is situated directly over the border from Kilarrow in the extreme NW of the holding. In contradiction to what was suggested about the name of the farm-district 'Daill' (see above); it is conceivable that the *dàil* element in this name might represent a 'assembly place' (*cf.* Jaski 2000:54). Whether this reference is fanciful and based on the conspicuous nature of the location (near the mouth of the river Sorn) or whether it is based on the memory of actual meetings which may have taken place there is difficult to say. Whatever the case, the phrasal form of the name points to a relatively modern coinage (*cf.* Watson 1904:xl-xli).

Context:

Cnoc na Dail lies approx 1.5km to the NW and the **River Sorn** approx. 1.4km to the N.

***

Gartloist [ˌgaɾ.ˈdoːɪʃtʃə]

NR 333 609

Gartelosk (1507) *Gartlosk* (1509) *Gartlosky* (1562) *Gartlosky* (1563) *Gartlosk* (1541a) *Gartlosk* (1541b) *Gartlosky* (1562) *Garflosk* (1584) *Garclosk* (1614) *Garclosk* (1627) *Gartlonsk* (1631) *Gartluiské* (1654) *Gartlosk* (1662) *Garlast* (1665) *Gartlosk* (1686) *Gartlosk* (1722) *Gartlosk* (1733) *Gartlosk* (1741) *Gartloist* (1749) *Gartlusk* (M)

Etymology: G *gart* (m) + *loisgte* (v/adj)

The usual interpretation of this name – G **Gart loisgte*, 'scorched or burnt field' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Gillies 1906:156; Maceacharna 1976:100) – would accord well with the known agricultural practise of burning back the heather. It is worth considering, however, that the genitive and plural forms of G *losaid*, 'kneading trough' are *loiste* and thought to have given rise to 'all those places [in Ireland] now called Lustia and Lusty – both signifying simple fertile spots, *e.g.* Druim-na-loiste (in AFM 1597) and the ridge of the kneading near Inver in Donegal, now called Drumnalost' (Joyce 1922:430). There is a possibility therefore, that this name could derive from an original meaning 'the fertile enclosure', not entirely inconsistent with the high relative soil quality of this area.

Associations:

Gartelosk et Corse (1507) *Gartlosk cum Coyf* (1509) *Gartlosk and Gartmean* (1686) *Gartloist & Gartmain* (1749)

Antiquities:

RCAHMS have identified a possible **burial ground** at **Cill a'Bhuilg**, about 400m to the W of Gartmain and 1.3km to the W of Gartloist, near the boundary with Grobolls. The site consists of a roughly circular earthern platform about 17m in maximum diameter and 0.9m high (RCAHMS 1984:159).

According to local tradition, the battle of Gartmain (NMRS:NR36SW 10) recalls a fight between the 'Fenians' and the 'Danes', resulting in the Danes being forced back to their ships in Lochindaal Bay (OS Object Name Book 1878). However, nothing of interest was found on this 'rounded pastoral ridge' when the site was visited by an OS inspector in May 1978.

Context:

The mouth of the **River Sorn** lies about 1.1km to the N (see notes on Surn below).

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Glebe (Unkown)

NR near Kilarrow

Glebe (1749) *Glebe* (M)

Etymology:

According to CSD (236), a Glebe is 'the portion of land assigned to a parish minister in addition to his stipend'. In this particular case it refers to the glebes and manses, given to the two Islay ministers in the vicinity of Kilarrow in the late 17th and early 18th centuries (Ramsay 1991:76).

Associations:

Glebe (1749) *Glebe* (M)

Context:

Cnoc na Dail lies approx. 1km to the S (see notes on Gartachossan above); and the **River Sorn** slightly less in the same direction (see notes on Surn below).

Grobolls [ˈg̊rɔːˌb̥ʌɬs]

NR 338 598

Crobollis (1507) *Crobollis* (1509) *Crowbossill* (1541a) *Crowbossill* (1541b) *Grobolsay* (1562) *Grobolsay* (1563) *Grobolse* (1584) *Crowbossill* (1614) *Garbols* (1615) *Crowbossill* (1627) *Grobastall* (1631) *Crowbosell* (1662) *Cronbohill* (1665) *Grobollis* (1686) *Grobols* (1722) *Grobels* (1733) *Groballs* (1741) *Grobolls* (1749) *Grobolls* (M)

Etymology: ON *Gró(a)* (f) / *grár* (adj) / *kró* (f) + *bólstaðr* (m)

While the generic here is almost certainly ON *bólstaðr*, the specific is more difficult to ascertain. Although Gammeltoft (2001:118-9) suggests the ON adjective *grár*, meaning 'grey', it is hard to see how this could have been descriptive of the lush, green fields and pastures of this farm-district. Maceacharna's (1976:81) suggestion of the ON female personal-name *Gróa* (or *Gró*) is more plausible, with a search for 'Gró' on NG returning 24 hits. An alternative would be to see the specific as ON *kró* (f). According to CVC (356), ON *kró* signifies 'a small pen or fence', which, in Iceland, was the pen in which lambs when weaned are put during the night. In Shetland, it commonly denotes a sheep-fold: *cf.* Kro, Kroteng, Krofel

etc. (Jakobsen 1936:72). NG lists a Krom in Akershus amt and a Kroen in Nedenes amt. Given the secondary nature of the name Grobolls, it is reasonable to postulate an origin in the part of a larger holding where sheep were once raised.

Associations:

Garbols et Duach (1615) *Grobastall and Knockglag* (1631) *Grobollis and Kinkglas* (1686)

Context:

Cnocan Ghrobolls is *c.* 450m to the WNW.

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Island (House) ['ai:lan̥]

'The other lewirheis of the Illand waist under the Lairdis cattell' (1686)

NR 307 567

Alane Mackindow (1494) *Ilylan* (1507) *Ylan* (1509) *Ilaneynnusk* (1541a) *Ilaneynnuisk* (1541b) *Ellenmowikduffe* (1562) *Ellanmawmukduff* (1563) *Ellenomukydow* (1584) *Ilanynmusk* (1614) *Iylairnynnuisk [vel Ilannynnuisk]* (1627) *Illandis* (1631) *Ilanamusk* (1662) *Ilanamusk* (1665) *Illandis; Illand* (1686) *Island* (1722) *Island* (1733) *Island* (1741) *Island* (1749) *Island* (M)

Etymology: G *eilean* (m) + *na* (art) + *muc* (f) + *dubh* (adj)

The forms recorded in the rentals and charters from 1686 onwards are a contraction of the earlier G **Eilean na Muice duibhe*, meaning 'island of the black pig'. While the use of 'island' is likely to be figurative – in reference to a patch of dry land in an otherwise boggy landscape – the 'black pig' element could be a reference to livestock or a person or group of persons with that epithet (*cf.* Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:105). While it is tempting to link this name with the pork-loving and Pict-abusing Islay noble called Feradach who is mentioned in chapter II:23 of Adomnán's *Life of Columba* (Sharpe 1995:172-3), this association is of course fanciful.

Attention was drawn by Gillies (1906:156) to the high concentration of G place-names containing the adj *dubh* in the vicinity – such as Torradu, Torran dubh, Duich (see above) and Eilean na Muice duibhe – without commenting on the potential significance of this phenomenon. While it is possible that this shared specific points to the previous existance of a large estate, it is perhaps more likely given the local landform and its most common flora, that *dubh* has the associative meaning of 'heather-covered' (*cf.* Cox 2002:43-4).

Associations:

Skanlastill, Kynbeloquhane, Capolse, Robolse, Litil Capolse, Kilbranne, Dulloch, Ochtownwruch, Arrevore, Correre, Curloch et Alane Mackindow, in insula de Ila (1494) *Ilylan et Corozen* (1507) *Ylan et Corraren* (1509) *Laggane, Dowauch, Ardlaurauch, Corrare, Ilaneynnusk* (1541a) *Laggane, Dowaurauch, Ardlaurauch, Corrare and Ilaneynnuisk* (1541b) *Ellenmowikduffe* (1562) *Ellanmawmukduff* (1563) *Corrare and Ilanynmusk* (1614) *Corrare et Iylairnynnuisk [vel Ilannynnuisk]* (1627) *Corarie et Ilanamusk* (1662) *the other half [of Glengaddill], Delilun, Kynegarie, Laggan, Donach, Ardlarach, Corrurre and Ilanamusk* (1665)

Antiquities:

The **fort** at **River Laggan** lies approx. 1.1km SW of Island House near the confluence of rivers Laggan and Duich (NMRS:NR25NW 22).

Context:

The present farm buildings are situated on the southern bank of **River Laggan** (see notes on Laggan below).

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*Kilarrow [ˌkʲilə'ɯːʔə]

NR 332 628

Kilmacow (1507) *Kilmokew* (1509) *Kilmorvin* (1549) *Kilorow* (1631) *Kilmolrow* (1654) *Killorow* (1686) *Kilvarow* (1722) *Killiearow* (1722) *Killerow* (1722) *Killarow* (1733) *Killarow* (1741) *Kilarow* (1749) *Killarow* (M)

Etymology: G *cill* (f) + *Máel Rhubha* (m)

While the specific of this G *cill* or 'church'-name (see below) is popularly believed to be G *rudha* or 'promontory', the location of Tràigh Cill an Rubha at the head of one of the island's best known bays – Loch Indaal – makes this unlikely. Examination of the early forms points instead to derivation from 'Máel Rhubha', an Irish saint who died in AD 722 (Watson 1936:287-8; Maceacharna 1976:52). The form 'Kilmocew' recorded in MacIan's extent of 1507 appears to be a scribal error/ misinterpretation of 'Kilmarew'.

Associations:

de octava parte de Kilmacow (1507) *Octava pars de Kilmokew* (1509) *Brewhows at Killorow* (1686) *Mylne of Killiearow* (1722) *Brew houses of Killiearow* (1722) *Killerow brewhouses* (1722) *Killarow Miln* (1733) *Town of Killarow* (1733) *Eolobolls, Miln of Killarow, Knockens* (1741)

Antiquities:

The old parish **church** of Kilarrow stood within the bounds of this farm-district on the policies of Islay House before it was demolished and the current parish church erected at Bowmore in 1769 (NRMS:NR36SW 5). Although no traces of the building remain, the architectural features shown in two late 18th century drawings suggest that at least parts of it dated to the late 13th century (RCAHMS 1984:184). The style of decoration on a number of **sculptured stones** from the vicinity of the old church building give further corroboration for usage in the 14th century – about the same time that the independent parsonage of St Maelrubha enters the historical record. The parsonage remained under the patronage of the Lords of the Isles until their forfeiture in 1493 (OPS:261), before passing, for a short period in the 16th century to the rectory of Urney in the diocese of Derry (RCAHMS 1984:184) and disappearing from the records by the Reformation.

Although the **fort** of **Bridgend** on Cnoc na Dail (NMRS:NR36SW 24) is less than 300m to the SW, it appears from the divisions on MacDougall's map that this structure lay within the bounds of Gortachossan.

Context:

Cnoc na Dail is less than 300m to the SW (see notes on Gartachossan above); and the **River Sorn** slightly less in the same direction (see notes on Surn below).

***

*Kilennan [ˌkʲil ˈiːnə̆n]

Killenane (1507) *Killenen* (1509) *Kelelane* (1541a) *Kelelane* (1541b) *Killenane* (1545) *Killenane* (1558) *Kilelane* (1614) *Delelan [vel Killilane]* (1627) *Killinan* (1631) *Delelay* (1662) *Delilun* (1665)

Etymology: G *cill* (f) + ?*Fìonán* (m)

G **Cill Fhìonáin* 'the Church of St Finan Lobur (G 'the diseased/ infirm)' (*c.* AD 550-600) (Watson 1926:285). Finan was a native of Munster, whose name is also commemorated in Kilfinan in Cowal (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:53).

Associations:

Killenane cum piscaria de Lessane (1507) *Killenen cum piscaria de Lessane* (1509) *Kelelane* (1541a) *Eskcok, Glennagadill (one half), Glennagadill (other half), Kilelane* (1614) *the other half [of Glengaddill], Delilun, Kynegarie, Laggan, Donach, Ardlarach, Corrurre and Ilanamusk* (1665)

(Upper) Kilennan

'Killinan Upper, a speciall good room for holding and fattening' (1722)

NR 356 581

Over Killinane (1686) *Over Killinan* (1722) *Upper Killenan* (1733) *Killcarnenm, Upper & Nether* (1741) *Killinan (Uppr)* (1749) *Upper Killeenan* (M)

(Lower) Kilennan

'Killinan Nether good for sowing and stock' (1722

NR 350 570

Nather Killinane (1686) *Nether Killinan* (1722) *Nether Killenan* (1733) *Killcarnenm, Upper & Nether* (1741) *Killinan (Lwr)* (1749) *Lower Killeenan* (M)

The remains of a **chapel**, long since obliterated by the construction of a sheep-pen, lie some 250m to the WSW of (Lower) Kilennan (NMRS:NR35NE 2).

Context:

Kilennan River runs within 350m of both sets of farm buildings. **Allt na Tri-dail**; **An Tri-dail**, **Cnoc na Tri-dail**; **Cnoc Amanta** (55m); and the summit of **Cnoc Crò a' Mhàil** are all within 2km of Lower Kilennan (see notes on Avonvogy above).

According to local tradition Kilennan was once the site of a ship-building enterprise (Jock Campbell and Neil Maceachern pers. comm.). It is tempting to see the remnant forest in the valley of Allt na Tri-dail as the source of raw-materials for this endeavour (*cf.* notes on Avinvogie above).

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Killinallan [kʲiʎə.ña:lɪŋ]

'Killenailen being wadset to the present possessors, being the very best wadset of so much in Islay' (1722)

NR 313 718

Killenadane (1507) *Killenadan* (1509) *Killeyalane* (1541a) *Killeyanlane* (1541b) *Kylnalen* (1542) *Kinkaillen* (1562) *Kelenallane* (1614) *Killanallane* (1627) *Kilenalzean* (1631) *Killesalan* (1662) *Killienallan* (1665) *Killinalziane* (1686) *Killenaillen* (1722) *Kilinalen* (1733) *Killanallan* (1749) *Killenalien* (M)

Etymology: G *cill* (f) + *Faelan* (m) OR **Allan* (m)

While Maceacharna's (1976:52) suggestion of G **Cill an Àilien*, 'the church of the green sward', provides an apt description of the lush green pastureland of this part of the island, it is inconsistent with the name-typology of almost every other *cill* name in Islay. With the exception of Kilnave in Kilchoman, these all appear to have saints' names as specifics. Thomas (MS) suggests that the patron of this particular church was St Faelan. Local tradition, on the other hand, associates it with an otherwise unattested St Allan (Maceacharna 1976:52; Martin 2002:149). Either is possible.

Associations:

Killenadane et Garisay (1507) *Killenadan et Garresay* (1509) *Killeyalane and Carrissay* (1541a) *Killeyanlane, Carissay* (1541b) *Kelenallane and Crosmoir* (1614) *Killanallane et Croismoir* (1627) *Corspallan, Croismoir, Kilenalzean and Altgaristill* (1631) *Killesalan et Karesay* (1662) *Killenollay et Crassmoir* (1662) *Killienallan and Crasmore* (1665) *Killinalziane, Crosmoir, and Aldgarnstill* (1686) *Kilinalen, Ardnahow* (1733)

Antiquities:

The chapel of 'Kilhan Alen' is one of five listed by Martin in his late 17th century list of Islay Churches (2002:149). Although the burial ground of **Cill an Ailien** lies about 450m to the NNE of the modern farm buildings, there are no identifiable remains of a chapel (RCAHMS 1984:324); (NRMS:NR37SW 1).

The place-names **Cnuic na Croise** and **Crois Mhór**, 1.75 and 2.5km to the SW resp., point to the previous existence of a (boundary?) cross-slab or carving (*cf.* notes on Corsapol in Kilchoman).

Context:

The low-lying the hill of **Cnoc Gormadail** [ˌkrɔːxk ˈg̊ɔrmə̥ˌd̥ăɬ] lies *c.* 650m to the SW. Although this construct is G, the terminal onomastic unit *Gormadail appears to derive from a formally primary ON – *dalr* or 'valley' compound. While the specific could be either ON *korn* (m), 'corn' or the male byname *Korni*, gen. *Korna* (*cf.* NSL:189), the proximity of the knoll to a large stretch of fertile, stabilised sand dunes favours the former. NG lists a 'Kormset' in Romsdals amt, with a conspicuous medial /m/, which appears to derive from ON **Kornasetr*.

While the hill-name **Am Màla** [əmˈaːɬə] (82m) *c.* 1.55km to the ESE could be seen as a Gaelic reference to its apparant similarity in shape to a set of pagpipes (Gillies 1906:208), it is perhaps equally likely to stem from a simplex ON **Fjall* 'hill'. **Loch a'Mhàla** [ˌɬɔːx əˈvaɬə / ˈduːx əˌvalə] is nearby.

The sheiling of **Sornasairidh** some 3.5km to the ESE falls within the bounds of Killenailien as shown on MacDougall's map. While the element *airigh*, meaning 'shieling', is originally G, the specific-generic order of the elements in this place-name and the incidence of what appears to be a medial, genitive /s/ suggest Norse origins. Although the generic could be ON *ærgi* (n), sheiling, the original form of the specific is obscure.

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Kinnabus [ˈkʲɪnəˌb̥ɯs]

'Kinnabols and Alabols a good quarter land. Alike good for stock and sowing' (1722)

NR 313 633.[239]

Kynnabollis (1507) *Kynnabollis* (1509) *Kynnabols* (1588) *Kinabols* (1631) *Kinabollis and Allabollis* (1686) *Kinnabols and Alabols* (1722) *Kenabolls* (1733) *Kenabolls* (1741) *Kinabolls* (1749) *Kinabolls* (M)

Etymology: ON ?*kona* (f) + *bólstaðr* (m)

[239] Although this name is no longer extant, it appears from MacDougall's map to have occupied approximately the same locatiopn as Tayandock.

This name is usually explained along with Kinnabus in Kildalton as ON **Kinnarbólstaðr*, 'the steading on the cheek (of land)' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:85; Gammeltoft 2001:127). However, as the hillside which stretches northwards from Tayandock slopes only gently and does not therefore constitute a 'cheek of land' (*cf.* Indl:60; NSL:182), this seems unlikely (see also notes on Kinnabus in Kildalton). ON **Kymabólstaðr*, 'the farm of the dark retired nook', is another possibility – although once again, this is difficult to justify given the relatively flat and open nature of the local topography. Perhaps a better explanation, therefore, is Gillies' (1906:225) suggestion of ON **Kunubólstaðir*, with **kunu* being a genitive variant of ON *kona* (f), 'woman'. Gillies interprets this compound as 'queen's farm' (see also Matras 193:181). Although he is unable to suggest which, if any, queen was associated with Kinnabus, it is possible that the name indicates an ancient pairing with Consiby, 'king's farm', on the opposite side of Lochindaal (see above). It is also possible, however, that such a name could be interpreted literally as 'women's farm'. Attention can be drawn here to the farm-names Mandebrekke, 'Men's brae', in Nordre Bergenhus amt, Norway and Kvennarbreka, 'women's brae', in Dala sýsla in Iceland. According to Rygh, names like this were coined at a time when the places in question were populated exclusively by men or women.

Associations:

Kinabols, Allabols, Carabols (1631) *Kinabollis and Allabollis* (1686) *Kinnabols and Alabols* (1722)

Antiquities:

The remains of a possible **chapel** of similar proportions to that found at Bruichladdich lies near the farm buildings at Tayandock (NMRS:NR36SW 13)

Context:

Borichill Mór and **Borichill Crotach** are both within 1.5km to the NW (see notes on Carrabus above).

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Kynagarry [ˈkhʉːnəˌgʲɛri]

'Kynagarrie a speciall quarter land for sowing and holding' (1722)

NR 377 589

Kynnagarry (1507) *Kynnagarry* (1509) *Kynnegary* (1541a) *Kynnegary* (1541b) *Kynagarry* (1562) *Canagarie* (1563) *Cannagarrie* (1584) *Kynnegary* (1614) *Kynnegary* (1627) *Kinegary* (1631) *Kinegarie* (1662) *Kynegarie* (1665) *Kinagarie* (1686) *Kynagarrie* (1722) *Kinegary* (1733) *Kinegarie* (1741) *Kynagary* (1749) *Coinigarry* (M)

Etymology: ON *?kví* (f) + *?na* (art) + *garðr* (m)

Although Thomas' (MS) suggestion of G **Caoingaradh*, 'the farm of the smooth place', is a good match for the local pronunciation, it is hardly descriptive of the area around the current farm centre, which is riddled with small valleys and other undulations. With the specific-generic word order in this name being unusual for G, it seems likely, therefore, that the current pronunciation reflects G adaptation of a pre-existing Norse name. Both Maceacharna (1976:119) and Gillies (1906:225) saw this as ON **Kinnargarðr* meaning the 'farm of the cheek (of land)'. As with Kinnabus above, however, there are no cliffs in the vicinity of the present farm centre – whether 'cheek-like' or otherwise – which might justify this interpretation. While it is possible that the farm-district of Kynagarry once encompassed the neighbouring lands of Kilennan and with them the steep NW slopes of Beinn Bhàn, there is an easier alternative.

As early as 1886 (577-8), Thomas himself had noted that ON *kví* often comes first in compound place-names in the Northern Isles – *eg.* Qouyschorsetter, Quoysmiddie, Qouybanks, Quoy Ronald, instead of Schorsetterquoy, Smiddiequoy, Banksquoy and Ronald's quoy. It has since been noted by Marwick that the pre-positional Orkney *kví* is occasionally augmented with a form of the definite article, including 'Queenalanga' (1952:158) and 'Quoynaknap' (1952:181). If this observation is accurate, there is no reason why Islay Kynagarry might not also derive from an earlier ON form along the lines of **Kvína(r)garði* 'the farm of the animal pen(s)'. Indeed, the relatively large size of this farm-district, which includes extensive upland areas, points to its previous importance in the local transhumance economy. It may be significant in this respect that Kynagarry is adjacent to Allalladh, which is known from 18th century sources to have been acquired by the tenants of Nosebridge as a 'pendicle' for the purpose of summer grazing.

Associations:

the other half [of Glengaddill], Delilun, Kynegarie, Laggan, Donach, Ardlarach, Corrurre and Ilanamusk (1665)

Context:

Cnoc Cró a'Mhail is approx. 1.4km to the WNW. **Cnoc Amanta** is about 1.5km to the WSW (see notes on Avinlussa above); and the **River Laggan** 1km to the N (see notes on Laggan below).

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Lagbuie [ˌɬaǧˈb̥uːʔi]

NR 333 628

Lagbuy (1749) *Lagboy* (M)

Etymology: Uncertain: (G *lag* (f) + *buidhe* (adj)) OR (ON *lag* (n) + *búð* (n))

The modern form of this name might could point to origins in G **Lagbuidhe*, the 'yellow hollow' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:191). Considering the coastal location of this farm-district, however, it is possible that derivation is from an earlier ON **Lag(ar)búð* meaning 'storage place (for fish or salt)' (*cf.* Rygh's treatment of Labu in Akershus amt and Laarbu in Smaalenenes amt). Indeed, as far back as late 18th century, the Rev. John Murdoch reported that Loch Indaal 'abounds with all sorts of fish; and, in good weather, the inhabitants, with small boats, supply themselves abundantly' (Sinclair 1983:409). On balance, the linguistic origins of this name must be considered uncertain.

Context:

The **River Sorn** lies just under 1km to the SE (see notes on Surn below); and the hill of **Cnoc na Dail** slightly further in the same direcrion (see notes on Gartachossan above).

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Laggan [ˈɬaʔg̊an]

'Laggan is down of the rent, and is more pleasant than profitable' (1722)

NR 285 555

Lagane (1507) *Lagane* (1509) *Laggane* (1541a) *Laggane* (1541b) *Lagan* (1562) *Lagane* (1563) *Laggan* (1584) *Laggane: Together with the fishings of Laggane* (1614) *Laggan* (1627) *Lagan* (1631) *Lagan* (1631) *Laggan* (1654) *Laggan* (1662) *Laggan* (1665) *Lagan* (1665) *Laggan* (1686) *Laggan* (1722) *Lagan* (1733) *Laggan* (1741) *Laggan* (1749) *Lagan* (M)

Etymology: Uncertain: (G *lag* (f) + *an* (dim. part.)) OR (ON *lax* (m) + *á* (f) + *nni* (art))

The place-name 'Lag(g)an' is relatively common in Scotland, with the OS 1:50,000 Gazetteer listing 19 simplex and well over 100 compound examples spread over 7 of the country's 12 pre-1995 regional authorities (OS 1987:83). In Islay, as elsewhere, it is usually interpreted as G **Lagan*, from *lag* (f) 'hollow/ cavity' (Dwelly:562; M:221; DGL:355) with the diminutive suffix *-an* (DGL:355), giving a meaning of 'little hollow' (*cf.* OS 1995:11). At first glance, the names of the farm-district and river 'Laggan' in Islay appear to fit this mould rather well. Both local pronunciation and some of the earliest written forms seem reasonably consistent with an original G **Lagan*. There are, however, no particularly conspicuous 'hollows' near the present farm-buildings While this does not, of course, preclude the historical existence of such a feature, there are also grounds for supposing an ON etymology.

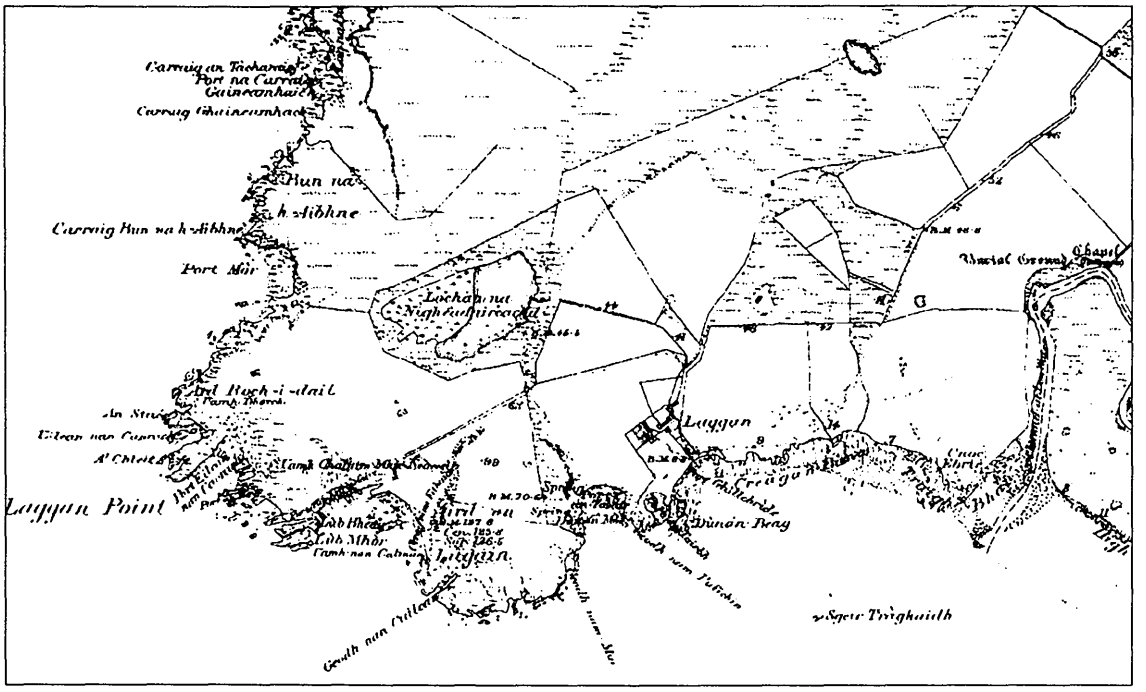

Figure 75: Laggan as shown on the OS 1878 6" to the mile map (http://www.old-maps.co.uk Accessed 4 April 2004)

It is possible that the suggested derivation of Avinlussa from ON **Laxá* (see above) in reference to an inland stretch of the River Laggan is in fact applicable to the entire watercourse. If so, it could be argued that the farm-name Laggan represents G adaptation of an earlier ON **Laxá*.

Associations:

Laggane, Dowauch, Ardlaurauch, Corrare, Ilaneynnusk (1541a) *Laggane, Dowaurauch, Ardlaurauch, Corrare and Ilaneynnuisk* (1541b) *Laggane: Together with the fishings of Laggane, Dowawch, Ardlaurach, Corrare and Ilanynmusk* (1614) *Lagan, Duauch Nether* (1631) *Laggan and over Duauch* (1631) *the other half [of Glengaddill], Delilun, Kynegarie, Laggan, Donach, Ardlarach, Corrurre and Ilanamusk* (1665) *Laggan, Keilchalumkeill, and Torra* (1686) 'The salmond fishing of the water of Laggan' (1686) *Laggan and Torra* (1722) *Lagan & Toro* (1733) *Laggan and Torra* (1741)

Antiquities:

The apparent remains of the **dun, Dùnan Mór** (NMRS:NR25NE 20) are supplemented by the remains of a **fort** at **Cnoc Eabric** some 600m to the E of Laggan farm (NMRS:NR25NE 7).

A quantity of pot sherds including a late Neolithic or early Bronze Age comb decorated fragment and some grass-tempered ware that is believed to be of the '**Viking-period**' were found at **Rubha Buidhe** (NR279570) some 1.7km to the NW. The same investigation uncovered the remains of a building that was being destroyed by erosion. While this was suspected to date to the Norse period, there was insufficient evidence to verify this suspiscion without excavation (NMRS25NE 21; Gordon 1991:57).

Until the late 19th century, the chapel site at Laggan consisted of the remains of a **chapel** measuring 24 ½ E-W by 10 feet internally, a burial ground – last used to bury a sailor in 1824 – and several carved stones, one of which appears to be a **cross-slab** dating possibly from the 9th to 11th centuries (NRMS:NR25NE 1). Erosion by the river Laggan has since obliterated all trace of this site.

Martin (2002:149), in his description of the Isles from *c.* 1695, lists 'St Columbus, his church at Laggan' as one of five churches in Islay. This accords with the references to:
Kilcallumkill (1541a) *Kilcallumkill* (1541b) *Kilcalmkill* (1562) *Kilcalumkill Corrare and Ilanynmusk* (1614) *Kilcallumkill* (1627) *Keilchallumkeill* (1631) *Kilcalmukle, Torra* (1665) *Laggan, Keilchalumkeill, and Torra* (1686)
and its association with Laggan in the rentals (see above).

Context:
River Laggan flows into Loch Indaal *c.* 750m to the E of Laggan farm; and **Grunnd Loch** lies approx 1.5km to the N of Laggan farm-buildings (see notes on Ardlarach above).

There is a posibility that the sheltered natural harbour of **Port Ghillebride**, about 150m to the SE of the farm-buildings at Laggan, preserves the memory of Somerled Mac Gilla-brigte, or one of his descendents, and their one-time control over this holding. The presence of a **Cnoc a Ghàidhil**, G for 'The hill of the Gael', *c.* 1.2km to the E of Laggan (2.4km to the WNW of Duich; and 1.5km to the NW of the dunes at Cruach Mhór) could be significant in this respect. Could these names reflect the settlement of Gaels from Kintyre in a culturally Norse environment?

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Lyrabus [ˈʎiɯrəˌb̥ɯs]

'Lerabols a good auchten part for stock and sowing' (1722)

NR 292 644

Keirbous (1499) *Lirepollis* (1507) *Kirepollis* (1509) *Lerebols* (1631) *Lyrbos/ Lyrebols* (1654) *Lerabollis* (1686) *Lerabols* (1722) *Lyrabolls* (1733) *Lirabolls* (1741) *Loarabus* (1749) *Lyrabolls* (M)

Etymology: ON *leira* (f) + *bólstaðr* (m)
The generic here is clearly ON *bólstaðr*. Gammeltoft (2001:135) suggests a specific of ON *leirr* (m), meaning 'clay, mud'. Given the location of this holding, however, on the low lying, alluvial plain between Lochs Gruinart and Indal and the fact that it wasn't properly drained until the 19th century, a specific from ON *leira* (f), meaning 'the muddy shore at low water mark' Muddy Steading' is perhaps more likely (CVC:383; *cf.* Maceacharna 1976:85; Gillies 1906:232; Thomas).

Associations:

Corspellan, Keirbous (1499) *Lirepollis et Cullipollis* (1507) *Kirepollis et Cowrepollis* (1509) *Cullabols and Lerebols* (1631) *Culabolls, Lirabolls* (1741) *Loarabus & Blackrock* (1749)

Context:

The farm buildings at **Erasaid** lie approx 1km to the N and **Druim na h-Erasaid** about 1.5km to the NW (see notes on Coulabus above); **Borichill Mór** and **Borichil Crotach** are within about 1.5km to the WNW (see notes on Carrabus above); and the hill called **Lamh-beinn** [ˈlɛːˌviŋ] *cf.* [ˈlãːvˌbiŋ] (49m) *c.* 1km to the ESE. Although this last name appears to contain the common G generic *beinn* (f), 'hill, mountain', the specific-generic word-order is more typical of ON than G. While this observation led Maceacharna's (1976:119) to suggest derivation from ON **hladstack*, there are neither 'rocky cliffs', nor 'sea-stacks' anywhere near this low hill. It is possible that the element *beinn represents translation of ON *fjall* (n) 'hill, mountain' (*cf.* notes on Got-bheinn under Killerin and Brade in Kilchoman). If the generic is ON, however, it is perhaps more likely to be ON *bingr* (m), whose meaning of 'heap, mound' accords much better with the local topography.

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Mullindry [ˈmɯːlɪnˌd̥re]

'Mullindrei & Leatur a good possession, very good for sowing, and a competent holding' (1722)

NR 358 596

Mullumtre (1499) *Mullyndry* (1507) *Mullindry* (1509) *Mullendryn* (1541b) *Mullentre* (1545) *Millintre* (1558) *Mullendryne* (1614) *Milleneryne [vel Millandryne]* (1627) *Mullindryne* (1631) *Mul ledÿr* (1654) *Mullidrin* (1686) *Mullindrei* (1722) *Moulindra* (1733) *Mulendra* (1741) *Mulindry* (1749) *Mulindra* (M)

Etymology: G *muileann* (m) + *treabh* (m)

Thomas' (MS) suggestsion of G **Mullach an Stratha*, 'top of the strath', seems overly complex and not particularly well supported by the pronunciation, early forms or topography. Considering that the present farm-buildings at Mullindy are situated on the N bank of a bend in the River Laggan and are not only the furthest downstream in the group containing Rosker and Nosebridge (see associations below) but also approx. 600m to the WSW of a modern weir, it seems more likely that the name derives from a compound of G *muileann* (m) and *treabh* (m) (but *cf.* Maceacharna 1976:111).

Associations:

Rosker, Navisborge, Mullumtre (1499) *Mullyndry, Rosker, Nauisporge* (1507) *Mullindry, Rosker, Nawysporge* (1509) *Mullidrin* (1686) *Mullindrei & Leatur* (1722)

Context:

The farm buildings at Mulindra are approx. 900m to the NW of **Cnoc Crò a' Mhàil** (see notes on Avinlussa above). The two lie on opposite sides of the River Laggan. **Neriby Burn** (see below) joins the **River Laggan** (see notes on Laggan above) *c.* 550m to the ENE.

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Nereby [ˈneːrəˌb̥i]

NR 361 604

Ereby (1507) *Ereby* (1509) *Erebe* (1545) *Erebeye* (1558) *Nerebie* (1631) *Ereby* (1654) *Neribie* (1686) *Nerebie* (1722) *Nerebie* (1733) *Neribie* (1741) *Nereby* (1749) *Nerby* (M)

Etymology: ON *neðri* (adj) + *býr* (m)

The generic here is East Norse *býr* (m) 'farm' (see Chapter 7). As Nereby is several kilometres inland, however, and unserved by navigable rivers, it is unlikely, as both both Maceacharna (1976:90) and Thomas (MS) suggest, to have alluded to a *knörr* (m) or 'merchant ship' (Zoëga 2004:244). And even if this *knörr* were taken as a man's by-name, it is difficult to see how the initial dental stop would be absent from local pronunciation and every written form of the name (*cf.* notes on Nerabus in Kilchoman). The most likely explanation for this discrepancy is that the specific in Nereby is not in fact derived from ON *knörr* but the ON adjective *neðri* – giving a meaning of 'the lower or more southerly, farm' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:234).

Marwick (1952:82) lists a Netherby in Deerness Parish, Orkney; and NG a further 5 Norwegian examples of 'Nerby', from ON **Neðribýr*: with 3 in Kristians amt and one each in Hedemarkens and Smaalenenes amt. In addition to this, NG lists a further 7 examples of 'Nedrebø' *etc.*, all but one of which are in Romsdals or Stavangers amt. The majority of these are though to be derived from ON **Neðribœr*,

If the same interpretation is accepted for Islay's Nereby, it raises the possibility of a previously larger – *býr* district which has since been sub-divided. As Nereby has no associations in the early rentals, the other sub-division(s) in this unit are not be immediately obvious. However, the (nameless) 115m hill which seperates it from Daill, some 2.2km to the N and the 137m rocky outcrop seperating it from Nosebridge, some *c.* 1km to the E, make a direct connection with either of these prestigous farm-districts unlikely. When geometric analysis of estate boundaries (Chapter 4) is combined with study of local extents, the most likely canidate appears to be Ballitarsin. Although the farm-centre at Nereby (*c.* 80m) is approx. 30m higher than that of Ballitarsin (*c.* 50m), it is just over a kilometre to the SW. As both farm-districts have the same extent in the early rentals – 1 quarter (33s. 4d.) – it must be wondered therefore whether Ballitarsin was the estate centre with the more southerly Nereby being considered the 'lower settlement,

whether Nereby itself was the original centre, or whether both farm-districts were previously designated by a now lost compound or simplex ON *býr* name (see also Chapter 7 and 8).

Context:

The present farm-buildings are situated on the W bank of the **Neriby Burn**; **Cnoc Crò a' Mhàil** is about a kilometre to the S (see notes on Avinlussa above); **Cnoc Oshamail** *c.* 1.5km to the NW (see notes on Daill above); and the **River Laggan** is about 600m to the S (see notes on Laggan above).

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Nosebridge [ˈnoːzˌbrɪdʒ]

'Nosebridge a good quarter land for stock and sowing, and down of the generall rentall' (1722)

NR 372 602

Navisporge (1499) *Nauisporge* (1507) *Nawysporge* (1509) *Noispork* (1541a) *Noispork* (1541b) *Navisburg* (1545) *Navisburgh* (1558) *Noispork* (1614) *Noispork* (1627) *Nosberg* (1631) *Noispork* (1662) *Noisporlk* (1665) *Nosbrig* (1686) *Nosbreidge* (1722) *Noseberg* (1733) *Naseberg* (1741) *Nosebridge* (1749) *Nosbrigg* (M)

Etymology: ON *hnauss* (m) + *borg* (f)

Maceacharna (1976:82) considered the interpretation of this name to be difficult. However, his musings that it might contain ON *brekkai* (f), 'slope', and an unidentified ON specific meaning 'hill' take no account of the highly conspicuous Iron Age fortification some 200m to the SW of the modern farm-buildings. Thomas' suggestion of ON **Hnausborg*, 'turf fortress', is a far more accurate reflection of the early forms, local pronunciation and the turf-covered remains of this monument (see below).

Figure 76: Dùn Nosebridge from the S

Associations:

Rosker, Navisborge, Mullumtre (1499) *Mullyndry, Rosker, Nauisporge* (1507) *Mullindry, Rosker, Nawysporge* (1509) *Nosberg and Roiskirm* (1631) *Corpalan and Noisporlk* (1665)

Antiquities:

The close proximity of the **nucleated fort** of **Dùn Nosebridge** (NMRS:NR36SE 10) is a clear indication of the high status enjoyed by this area during the Iron Age. It is of potentially even greater significance, however, that the only two field monuments of this type in Islay are located in the Laggan and Sorn valleys. As these areas contain most of the most fertile land in the island, there is a possibility that the forts of Dùn Nosebridge and Dùn Ghuaidhre (see notes on Kilmeny in Kilmeny) represent important cultural or administrative centres.

Context:

Cnoc Crò a' Mhàil is about 1.4m to the SW (see notes on Avinlussa above); **Cnoc Oshamail** less than 1.5km to the NW (see notes on Daill above); and the **River Laggan** *c.* 250m to the S (see notes on Laggan above).

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Octavullin [ˌɔxkə ˈvuʔli.ŋ]

NR 347 641

Ochdowmillin (1499) *Ochtomulyne* (1507) *Ochtomullin* (1509) *Ochtawelane* (1541a) *Ochtawelane* (1541b) *Auchtavelane* (1614) *Auchtavelan* (1627) *Ochtomullin* (1631) *Ochtevelan* (1662) *Ochtovelan* (1665) *Ochtomullin* (1686) *Octawillin and* (1722) *Octovulen* (1741) *Octavullin* (1749) *Oclawillin* (M)

Etymology: G *Ochdamh* (adj) + *a* (art) + *muileann* (m)

G **Ochdamh a'mhuilinn* 'the eighth (unit of extent) of the mill' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:92; Gillies 1906:107; Thomas). Examination of the early rentals shows that the extent of this holding was indeed '1/8th' or 16s. 8d. Given the early association with Skerrols, it is possible that this farm-district was previously the mill settlement for Skerrols farm.

Associations:

Terbolls & Ochdowmillin (1499) *Ochtomulyne et Drummall* (1507) *Ochtomullin et Drummal* (1509) *Ochtomullin, Kendchyll and Skeag* (1631) *Ochtovelan and Stanepoll* (1665) *Ochtomullin and Drumall* (1686) *Octawillin and Drumalla* (1722)

Context:

The mouth of **River Drolsay** feeds the NW corner of Loch Skerrols about 150m to the W of Octavullin farm buildings (see notes on Scarrabus below).

Rosquern [ˈrɔːsˌkɛrə̆n]

NR 384 610

Rosker (1499) *Rosker* (1507) *Rosker* (1509) *Roskar* (1541a) *Roskar* (1541b) *Rosker* (1545) *Rosker* (1558) *Roiskar* (1614) *Roisbar [Roskar?]* (1627) *Nosberg and Roiskirm* (1631) *Reisbar* (1665) *Roskirwd* (1686) *Roskerrne* (1722) *Rosequernn* (1733) *Rosequeren* (1741) *Roskern* (1749)

Etymology: G *ros* (m) + *a* (art) + *càrn* (m)

G **Ros a'chùirn*. While Gillies (1906:157) interprets this name as 'the promontory of the cairn', the farm-district of 'Roskern' as illustrated on MacDougall's map is not only land-locked, but devoid of any conspicuous projections in the landscape. It seems more likely therefore that the name should be understood as 'the wood/highland of the cairn'. According to MacBain, G *ros* (m) in this sense 'is generally regarded as the same word as *ros* promontory, explained as "promontorium nemorosum", with which is compared Welsh *rhos*, a moor, waste, coarse highland, Breton *ros*, a knoll'.[240] Although the supposedly eponymous cairn at Rosquern is impossible to identify, the old farm-district included some fairly rugged upland and there are, even today, patches of remnant woodland at its NE and SW extremities.

Associations:

Rosker, Navisborge, Mullumtre (1499) *Mullyndry, Rosker, Nauisporge* (1507) *Mullindry, Rosker, Nawysporge* (1509

Context:

The **Cattadail River** is approx. 750m to the S (see notes on Cattadale above); **Cnoc Oshamail** approx. 1km to the WNW (see notes on Avinlussa above); **Bheinn Bharradail** *c.* 2km to the NNW (see notes on Barr above); and the **River Lagan** just over a kilometre to the SSW (see notes on Laggan above).

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[240] http://www.ceantar.org/Dicts/MB2/mb31.html (accessed 7 September 2005).

Scarrabus [ˈskʰaːrəˌb̥ɯs]

NR 348 652

Terbolls (1499) *Skarbolls* (1507) *Starbollis* (1509) *Skarbols* (1541a) *Skarbols* (1541b) *Scarrabolsy* (1562) *Skarabolse* (1584) *Scarbols* (1614) *Scalbols [vel Scarbols]* (1627) *Skerbols* (1631) *Stalbols* (1662) *Starabolsay* (1563) *Scabballs* (1665) *Skarrabollis* (1686) *Scarrabols* (1722) *Scarabolls* (1733) *Scarabolls* (1741) *Scarrabus* (1749) *Skarabolls* (M)

Etymology: ON *Skári* (m) OR *skarð* (n) + *bólstaðr* (m)

While the generic here is clearly ON *bólstaðir*, the specific could be one of several ON nouns. Although Gammeltoft (2001:145) eschews the somewhat uncommon male, personal-name Skári in favour of ON *skári* (m), meaning 'young seagull' – which he explains as a reference to a nearby colony of gulls – it seems more likely that a farm would be named for a man with an uncommon name, such as Skári or Skarði (NID:909) than a variety of bird which is common all over the island (*cf.* Ogilvie 2003:45-6).

The existence of a **Cnoc Carrach** (133m) on the W side of the steep-sided 'Gleann Drolsay' some 1.5km to the WNW points to another explanation. Although this construct is G, there is a possibility that the terminal onomastic unit 'Carrach' does not in fact reflect G *carraig*, 'rock', but an earlier ON **Skarð*, 'mountain pass', suggesting that the original form of Scarrabus was ON **Skarðabólstaðr*, 'the farm of the pass'. ON *skarð* (n) is relatively common as both a simplex farm-name and place-name element in Norway (NSL:278); and the Faroes' northern isles (Matras 1933:245-6).

Associations:

Terbolls & Ochdowmillin (1499) *Skerbols and Drumall* (1631) *Scabballs and Ballietessan* (1665) *Scarabolls, Shingart, ½ Nether Stunsha* (1741)

Context:

The farm-buildings at Scarrabus lie some 600m to the E of the current course of **River Drolsay** [ˈd̥roːlsə]. This river flows through a **Glen Drolsay** from **Loch Drolsay** just over 2 kilometres to the NW. While these last two names appear to be G constructs, it seems likely that the onomastic unit 'Drolsay' common to all three is derived from ON **Trollsá*, the 'river of the troll'. The element 'troll-' is commonly used in Norwegian nature names to characterise wild and rugged terrain, the kind of place where supernatural beings might be thought to lurk (*cf.* NSL:321) – an apt description of this particular part of Kilarrow parish. NG lists 3 farms called Troldalen (1 in each of Jalsberg og Larviks, Nedenes and Smaalenenes amt), which might be derived from an original ON **Trolládalr*, the 'valley of troll river' or the river 'Trolla'. In addition to this, NR lists several hundred names containing the element *troll* (NR I:632-4; NR II (supplement) 2-5; NR III:556-9). While only a handful contain **Trollsá etc.* either as complete names

or onomastic units, the names Trollvatnet and Trollelva, 'troll-water' and 'troll river' respectively, are exremely common.

Loch Skerrols is about 1.15km to the SSW (see notes on Skerrols below); and **Goirtean Bhòlsach** [ˌgoːʈʧɛŋ ˈvoːlsɑx] and **Cnoc Goirtein Bhòlsach** [ˈkrɔːxk ˌgoːʈʧɛŋ ˈvoːlsɑx] lie approx. 1km and 1.2km to the NNW respectively (see notes on Balole in Kilmeny).

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Skerrols [ˈsk'ɛʔrə.s'ɪːɣ]

NR 351 638

'Skerrals a good quarter land, and the tuckmilne upon is a noble pennyworth, and a good croft annexed to it with some holding' (1722)

Sarrollis (1507) *Sarrollis* (1509) *Skarrals* (1588) *Skelreioch* (1614) *Skelereioch* (1627) *Skearrols* (1631) *Skerrols* (1686) *Skerrols* (1722) *Skerrals* (1722) *Skerrols* (1722) *Skerrols* (1733) *Skerrols* (1741) *Skerrols* (1741) *Skirrols* (1749) *Skerolls* (M)

Etymology: ON *Haraldr* (m) + *staðir* (m pl)

Although Gillies (1906:148) suggestion of ON **sker* + *bolls* – with the specific being 'a sea-term taken inland' – is lexical possibility, it is not mirrored by any of the extant forms, which all lack the requisite medial stop. The same can also be said of Thomas' ON **Skurhólastaðr*, 'trench-hill-place', which seems unnecessarily complex. Later forms of Skerrols could be explained as ON **Karlstaðir*, 'Karl's steading' with the addition of prosthetic G /s/ (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:117 FN 17; Cox 2002:64).[241] However, as the earliest forms lack an appropriate dental stop in the first syllable, it is possible that this too is a later innovation. A more plausible explanation might therefore be ON **Haraldsstaðir*, 'Harald's farm', perhaps through the gaelicised intermediaries of **An t-Haraldsstaðir* and **Taralstaðir*. Apocope in ON – *staðir* is common in Islay, where it is often reduced to [s'a] or [s'ɪːɣ]. NG lists 7 farms with names thought to derive form ON **Haraldsstaðir* – 2 each in Kristians and Smaalenenes amt, and one apiece in Hedemarkens, Jarlsberg og Larviks and Stavanger amt.

Associations:

Tuick mylne of Skerrols (1722) *Skerrols and Avinogy* (1733) *Balulve, Nether Stensha ½, ½ Skerrols and Avenvogie, Upper Stunsha* (1741) *Skerrols and Avenvogy* (1741)

[241] NG lists one Karlstad in Akershus amt and three in Smaalenenes amt.

Context:

The modern farm buildings are on the summit of a small hill, separated from **Loch Skerrols** about 600m to the W by the farm buildings of **Octavullin**. It seems likely from their relative locations and the 1499 reference that the holding of Octavullin was included in Skerrols.

The **River Sorn** fows past about 60m to the S (see notes on Surn below).

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*Surn (Newton Cottage) ['sɔrn]

NR 344 627

Suerne (1507) *Surnan* (1509) *Sorne* (1588) *Surnis* (1631) *Surne* (1686) *Surn* (1722) *Surn* (1733) *Surn* (1741) *Surn* (1749) *Surn* (M)

Etymology: ON **Surn(á)* (f) OR **Súrn(á)* (f)

Gillies (1906:148) implies derivation from G **Sorn* meaning 'kiln'. If by this he means 'corn-drying' kiln and intends it to be taken figuratively, it would certainly provide a reasonable description for what is now considered to be some of the best arable land in Islay. It does not, however, accord particularly well with most of the early forms. Perhaps a more likely explanation is that the etymology of the farm-name Surn, is tied up with that of its name-sake, the River Sorn.

It should be noted that many of the more substantial watercourses in Islay take their name from the farm-district through which they happen to be flowing or within whose bounds they enter sea. In the case of the river Sorn, however, whose valley constitutes the main watershed in northern Kilarrow and western Kilmeny and contains much of the most fertile land in Islay, the name was until recently consistent from Keppols(more) – where it is formed from the confluence of the Ballygrant Burn and Abhainn Gleann Mhàrtuin – to Bridgend (=Kilarrow) where it enters the sea. Interestingly, the farm-district of Surn lay between these two points. While it this farm-district could previously have encompassed the lands of 'Glebe' and Kilarrow to the ESE and thus the estuary of the river Sorn, it is also possible that the farm-district is in fact named for the river which forms its S and SE boundaries.

Maceacharna (1976:110-11) discusses the name of this river at length, toying with the idea that it might have its origins in ancient Celtic cosmology before deciding that it is in fact derived from an original G **So-Èireann*, 'Great Ireland (river)'. Given the pre-18th century forms of the district name and the ON origin of many of the neighbouring farm-districts, however, it seems more likely that the name is Norse. In Norway, the river *Surna* is the main watercourse between Rindalen and Surn(a)dalen in Møre and Romsdal in Norway (Rygh 1904:253), and thus an entirely appropriate model for Sorn in Kilarrow.

According to NSL (305), this Norwegian *Surna* could be derived from either ON **Súrn* or **Surn*, referring to the noise made by the river or the 'raw and damp' quality of the land around it. As the river Sorn is one of the biggest rivers in Islay, it may well have been named by speakers of ON for its distinctive 'rushing' sound.

Associations:

Dallochtonafeych, Kilbranan, and Surne (1686) *Daill, Octonafreitch, Kilbrannan, and Surn* (1722) *Dale, Surn & Kilbranan* (1733) *Dale, Surn and Kilbranan* (1741)

Antiquities:

A **Viking burial** comprising two bronze 'tortoise' brooches, some amber beads and some fragments of iron – all of which have now been lost – was discovered in a gravel bank on the strath near Newton distillery in 1845 (NMRS:NR36SW 2). The fact that they were found near some of the best arable land in Islay, in an area dominated by farm-districts with Norse names and appear to come from a diagnostically Scandinavian mid-high ranking female burial, is suggestive of a well-established Norse land-owning social stratum (Chapter 3).

Context:

The highest point on **Cnoc na Dail** lies about a kilometre to the SW (see notes on Gartachossan above).

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Tallant [ˈtaːɬənd̥ə]

'Talant a compact room, well situated, good for sowing and stock' (1722)

NR 336 586

Taulane (1507) *Tawlane* (1509) *Tawlynt* (1541a) *Tawlynt* (1541b) *Tallant* (1562) *Tallant* (1563) *Calant* (1584) *Taulynt* (1614) *Paulint [vel Taulynt]* (1627) *Talent* (1631) *Talanta* (1654) *Poulint* (1662) *Towlint* (1665) *Talent* (1686) *Talant* (1722) *Talent* (1733) *Talent* (1741) *Tallant* (1749) *Tallent* (M)

Etymology: ON *hár* (adj) + *land* (n)

Thomas (MS) suggests derivation from G *talamh* (m), 'soil' and/or *talamhanta* (m), 'earthy'. However, the location of Tallant, relatively high up on the NW slope of Cnoc Donn (98m), lends better to an etymology of ON **Há(va)land*, 'high farm' (*cf* Maceacharna 1976:123; Gillies 1906:23; see notes on Ardtalla in Kildalton for further discussion of this name).

Associations:

Towlint and Bellieclaven Ardnahave (1665) *Talent and Awinboggie* (1686)

Context:

Loch Tallant lies approx. 550m to the S. **River Laggan** is *c.* 1.5km to the SSE (see notes on Laggan above).

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Tigh nan Cnoc [ˌtei: nə ˈkrɔ:ixkʲ]

NR 354 647

Knox (1562) *Knockis* (1563) *Knokis* (1584) *Knockans* (1686)[242] *Taynaknock* (1722) *Tynaknock* (1733) *Tynacnock* (1741) *Taynoknock* (1749) *Taynornock* (M)

Etymology: G *tigh* (m) + *nan* (art) + *cnoc* (m)

G **Tigh nan Cnoc*, 'the house on the hill' (*cf.* Thomas; Gillies 1906:148). Although the farm itself is no longer extant, it appears from the location of Taynornock on MacDougall's map, that its latter day centre occupied one of the highest points in the immediate locallity.

Associations:

Leak Knox (1562) *Leak and Knockis* (1563) *Lek and the Knokis* (1584)

Context:

The **River Sorn** fows past *c.* 900m to the SE (see notes on Surn above); and **Abhainn Ath a'Mharchaichd** *c.* 900m to the ENE (see notes on Balole in Kilmeny).

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[242] Although the earliest definite form of Tigh nan Cnoc can be found in the 1722 rental, it is possible that some of the earlier references to a 'Knox' or 'Knockis' also refer to this farm-district. Considering that Tigh nan Cnoc was adjacent to the farm-district of Leek (see Kilmeny parish) and that Leek is associated with 'the upper pairt of Monyvinaskok' in 1686, it is safe to identify Tigh nan Cnoc with the Knockans associated with the 'lower end of Monyvinaskok' in 1686. This Knockans can be contrasted with the Knockane listed between Killorow and Kinabollis and Allabollis in 1686, which we see recorded as Knockans in 1722.

Torra [ˈd̥ɔː.ra]

NR 345 547

Torra (1541a) *Torra* (1541a) *Torray* (1562) *Torra* (1563) *Torra* (1614) *Torra* (1627) *Torra* (1631) *Torra* (1662) *Torra* (1665) *Torra* (1686) *Torra* (1722) *Toro* (1733) *Torra* (1741) *Torra* (1749) *Torra* (M)

Etymology: ON *horn* (n) + *á* (f)

Although Gillies (1906:158) sees this name as a simple variant of G *tòrr* (m), 'hill', it seems more likely, given the close proximity of the relatively substantial Torra River, that the terminal /a/ represents ON *á* (f), 'river'. Maceacharna suggests derivation from ON **Horná* (1976:82), which he interprets on the basis of local topography as 'river corner'. It should be noted, however, that the standard ON rendering of 'river corner' would be *árhorn*. A more plausible alternative might be to see the specific as a reference to the overlooking mountains. According to NSL (p.161), the formally secondary Hornindal in Sognefjord is derived from an earlier Horne, which in turn is likely to derive from a combination of ON *horn* + *vin* meaning 'natural meadow-land overlooked by mountains'.

Associations:

Keilchallumkeill, Torra & Avanvogie (1631) *Kilcalmukle, Torra* (1665) *Laggan, Keilchalumkeill, and Torra* (1686) *Laggan and Torra* (1722) *Lagan & Toro* (1733) *Laggan & Torra* (1741)

Context:

Torra River, some 250m to the E of the present farm buildings at Torra becomes the **Duich River** as it flows closer to Loch Indaal.

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3: KILMENY

Ardnahoe [ˌaɾ̊d̥.nə ˈhoː]

NR 423 616

Ardinho (1507) *Ardinho* (1509) *Ardinhow* (1541a) *Ardinow* (1541b) *Ardnahowe* (1562) *Ardnahow* (1563) *Ardnahow* (1584) *Ardinhow* (1614) *Ardinhow* (1627) *Ardnahow* (1631) *Ardnahau* (1662) *Ardnahave* (1665) *Ardnahow* (1686) *Ardnahew* (1722) *Ardnahow* (1733) *Ardnahowe* (1741) *Ardnahoe* (1749) *Ardnoho* (M)

Etymology: G *àird* (f) + *na* (art) + (ON *haugr* (m))

Maceacharna's (1976:114) explanation of G **Àird na h-Uamha*, 'the height or promontory of the cave' is a reasonable approximation of the written forms. However, it fails to accord with either local pronunciation or topography – the terminal vowel sound here is [oː] and not the [uː] we might expect from G *Uamha*; and there are no significant caves in the vicinity. While the construct is clearly G, it is perhaps more likely that the terminal onomastic unit **hoe* derives from a pre-existing ON **Haugr*, 'mound', of which there are several conspicuous examples near the present farm buildings. The element 'haug' is extremely common in Norwegian farm- and topographical-names (*cf.* NSL:144; Indl:53). A search for 'haugr' on NG returned 306 hits. It can also be found as singular (II, V, XIII, XV) and plural (IX, XXI) simplex in Iceland (Jónsson 1907-15:536) (*cf.* also Jakobsen 1936:51-2; Marwick 1952: 12, 32, 56, 71, 93, 120, 128, 135, 142, 152, 163, 176, 187).

Associations:

Ardinho et Balleulife (1507) *Ardinho et Balluleif* (1509) *Ballelew and Ardinhow, Ballegelane* (1541a) *Ballelew and, Ardinow. Ballegelane* (1541b) *Ballelewane Ardinhow, Ballegelane* (1614) *Ballelew and-Ardinhow* (1627) *Ardnahow and Cottarins* (1631) *Bellieclevan, Ardnahau* (1662) *Towlint and Bellieclaven Ardnahave* (1665) *Bolsa, Uaberneik, and Ardnahew* (1722) *Kilinalen, Ardnahow* (1733) *Ardnahowe and Cove* (1741)[243]

Antiquities:

None. It would be strange, however, if the defensive qualities of the promontory behind the present farm-buildings had not been utilised during the Iron Age.

Context:

The farm-buildings at Ardnahoe are situated on the neck of a small promontory jutting into **Ardnahoe Loch**. The hillside at **Bachlaig** [ˈb̥a.xə̆lɪg̊ʲ] is about 2.9m to the NNW with **Rubha Bhachlaig** and **Allt na Bachlaig** a further kilometre to the NNE. It has been suggested that the specific in the formally primary

[243] Care must be taken to distinguish this farm district from the 'How' shown in the 17th and 18th century rentals in the southern part of the Rhinns (see the section on 'associations' under Ballinaby in Kilchoman).

Bachlaig is G *bachull* (m), 'cozier', giving a meaning of 'curve place' (*cf.* Macheacharna 1976:114; Gillies 1906:145). Considering the sloping nature of this area, however, it is not impossible that Bachlaig represents G adaptation of an earlier ON **Bakkavik*, 'the bay of the bank'. NR lists several Norwegian examples of Bakkevik/ Bakkavik (NR I:14 & 16; NR II:16 & 18). While there are no direct cognates in NG, the element *bakki* is relatively common in Norwegian farm-names (*cf.* also NSL:65). Jakobsen (1936:21, 22, 76, 94 & 137) also gives numerous examples of Shetlandic place-names beginning with *bakki*, as does Marwick (1952:17, 38, 45, 48, 94) for Orkney, and Matras (1933:65) for the Faroes' northern Isles.

Figure 77: The farm-buildings at Ardnahoe – Note the promontory jutting into the loch

The small bay of **Port Borrachaig**, which lies about 850m to the SSE, appears to be based on a pre-existing ON **Borgarvik*. While the obvious translation of this compound would be 'bay of the fort',[244] this does not accord with the conspicuous absence of Iron Age fortifications near Ardnahoe. Although we should not discount the possibility that there once was such a structure in the vicinity, it seems more likely that *borg* in question was a 'rocky outcrop/ cliff' (see above). It may be siginificant, in this respect, that the coast on either side of Port Borrachaig is lined with cliffs and that the rocky protuberance at its northern extremity is known in G as *Carraig dubh*, the black rock. A further alternative might be to see the name as a later imitation of its namesake several km to the south on the eastern side of the former farm-district of Lossit.

Abhainn Araig flows past approx. 1.35km to the WNW (see notes on Balulive below).

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[244] See notes on Lossit in Kilchoman, Artalla and Tigh Cargaman in Kildalton and Lossit below.

Àiridh Ghutharaidh [ˌa.ri ˈɣu:ʔa.ri]

NR 399 626

'Ariegoware in Rentall '44 pays £47, 6s. 8d and full presents of ane auchten part, quhilk is ten pound of silver rent short and £16, 15s. 4d.; and in my opinion it will be no good pennyworth at that rent; and the presents is only omitted in Sir Richard Archibalds Rentall, quilk is £17, 8s. 8d.' (1722)

Arrevore (1494) *Aregoware* (1499) *Arevouvar* (1507) *Arewowar* (1509) *Arrewoware* (1541a) *Arewoware* (1541b) *Arregowarre* (1562) *Arigowarie* (1563) *Arrigowary* (1584) *Arrewoware* (1614) *Arrewoware* (1627) *Arriduarie* (1631) *Arrivorarie* (1662) *Ariedowarie* (1686) *Ariegowarie* (1722) *Ariquary* (1733) *Ariguary* (1741) *Ariguary* (1741) *Arighuary* (1749) *Ariquary* (M)

Etymology: G *àirigh* (f) + **Gutharaidh* (m)

Although clearly a G *àirigh* (f) or 'shieling' compound, there has been some debate over the specific. It was recently suggested by D. Meek, in a personal communication to D. Caldwell, that this was the compound **dubhàirigh* or 'black shieling', giving an effectively tautological **Àirigh dhubh àirigh* or 'sheiling of the black sheiling'. The apparent discrepancy between the intial /d/ of this onomastic unit and the /g/q/v/w/ more familiar from the written forms could be explained by the operation of the G grammar system. As lenition of initial G [d̥] and [g̊] can both lead to [ɣ], there is a possibility that a lack of lexical transparancy might have led to confusion on transcription, with lenited /d/ being represented by /g/ rather than the /dh/ we might expect from the modern standard (see Chapter 6). Nevertheless, it is difficult to see how such confusion might have arisen with a compound as simple as **Dubhàirigh*.

Considering that the vast majority of written forms show the [ɣ] as a /g/ or a /w/, it seems more likely that the nominal form began with a /g/. If so, it would be more reasonable to follow the traditional explanation of **Gutharaidh* as the male personal name 'Godred' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:99). Although ultimately derivative of ON *Guðrøðr* (NID:372 & 391-3), this name is likely to have been borrowed into G before entering the local onomastic vocabulary. Indeed, local belief that the man in question was a MacNeill (Maceacharna 1976:38) supports the idea of a post-Norse coinage. Given the presence of Dùn Guaidhre some 2km to the NNW, however, it is interesting to speculate that the eponymous holder of both properties was none other than Godred Crovan. While the written forms of *Gutharaidh and *Guaidhre look different, pronunciation is similar. But this need not mean that the names or the connection between them is the result of anything other than folk etymology (see notes on Kilmeny below, for further discussion).

Associations:

Skanlastill, Kynbeloquhane, Capolse, Robolse, Litil Capolse, Kilbranne, Dulloch, Ochtownwruch, Arrevore, Correre, Curloch et Alane Mackindow, in insula de Ila (1494) *Bar, Storegag, Aregoware*

(1499) *Ardach, Arrewoware* (1541a) *Ardach, Arewoware* (1541b) *Arrewoware, Ardach* (1614) *Arrewoware* (1627) *Arriduarie and Storgag* (1631) *Persabolls, ½ Ariguary, Port Askock, changehouse, ferry, malt-kiln, and changehouse of Balochroy* (1741)

Antiquities:

None, although it should be noted that the similarly named Dùn Guaidhre (NMRS36SE 9) lies about 2km to the NNW.

Context:

Loch Bharradail and **Allt Loch Bharradail** are less than half a kilometre to the NW and **Beinn Bharradail** about 750m to the W (see notes on Daill in Killarrow).

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Ardachie ['aɾ̊ˌd̥a.xɯɣ]

'Ardacha in Rentall 1644 pays £15, 17s. 4d. more rent' (1722)

NR 41 64

Ardacht (1499) *Ardauch* (1507) *Ardache* (1509) *Ardach* (1541a) *Ardach* (1541b) *Ardechay* (1562) *Ardaithay* (1563) *Ardacha* (1584) *Ardach* (1614) *Ardache* (1627) *Ardacha* (1631) *Ardoch* (1662) *Ardachie* (1665) *Ardacha* (1686) *Ardacha* (1722) *Ardochy* (1733) *Ardachie* (1741) *Ardochy* (1749) *Ardochy* (M)

Etymology: G *àird* (f) + *achadh* (m)

G **Àirdachaidh*, 'The high land of the field'. At *c.* 135m OD, the last known centre on this farm-district is amongst the highest in Islay.

Associations:

Balleachdracht, Balleclach, Ardacht (1499) *Ballechtarroch, Ardauch et Ballechlachag* (1507) *Ballechteroch, Ardache, et Balleclachag* (1509) *Ardach, Arrewoware* (1541a) *Ardach, Arewoware* (1541b) *Arrewoware, Ardach* (1614) *Ardachie, Ballegran with Mill and Changehouse* (1741)

Context:

Loch Bharradail and **Allt Loch Bharradail** lie within 1km to the W (see notes on Dail in Kilarrow).

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Baile Tharbhach [ˌbalɪ ˈharavax]

NR 362 674

'Ballcharvic a good quarter land both for sowing and stock, the muire thereof being amongst the best in the island, and down of the rent £33, 17s. 4d. at least' (1722)

Kaloharwuch (1499) *Baletharsauche* [the 's' here is an error for 'f'] (1506) *Balhervy* (1507) *Balloherve* (1509) *Ballaharvy* (1541a) *Ballaharvie* (1541b) *Beulleharway* (1562) *Balleharve* (1563) *Balleharvit* (1584) *Ballaharvie* (1614) *Ballaharvie* (1627) *Balloharvie and Ochtocorroch* (1631) *Bellieharvey* (1662) *Bellieharvie* (1665) *Kepollsmaokean* (1665) *Ballaharvie* (1686) *Balleharvie* (1722) *Balycharvie* (1733) *Ballieharvey* (1741) *Baliharvie* (1749) *Ballyharvey* (M)

Etymology: G *baile (m)* + *airbhe* (f)

While the generic here is quite clearly G *baile*, 'farm', the specific is rather more elusive. Although it could be explained as the G personal-name **Tarbhach* or perhaps a **tarbh-ach* or 'place of the bulls', the location of the old farm centre points to an alternative etymology. The ruins of the farm-buildings can still be seen directly to the W of the boudary-dyke separating Ballyharvey from the old Church holding of Ballyclavan. As Ballyharvey is therefore 'on the boundary' in terms of both location and proximity to the nearest Church holding, it seems likely that the specific is G *airbhe* (f), meaning 'a dividing wall or boundary' (*cf.* Watson 1926:479-80). If this G **Baile airbhe*, 'the farm by the boundary', was coined after the neighbouring holding was gifted to the Church, it could be considered late.

Associations:

Doweskir, Kaloharwuch, Stanelous (1499) *Sengart et Balhervy* (1507) *Sengart et Balloherve* (1509) *Keppolsmoir. Keppolsbeg. Ballaharv* (1541a) *Keppolsmor. Keppolsbeg, Ballaharvie* (1541b) *Keppolsmoir, Keppolsbeg, Ballaharvie* (1614) *Balloharvie and Ochtocorroch* (1631) *Keppolsbeg and Bellieharvie* (1665) *Kepollsmaokean* (1665)

Context:

The water of **Bhaile Tharbhaich** flows by approx. 450m to the SE.

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Ballachlaven [ˌbaləˌ ˈxlɛʔvɪŋ]

NR 371 675

'Ballechlaven & Robols. 2 quarter lands, wadset to John Campbell, now in his minoritie, and is 3000 merks. The worst wadset in the countrie' (1722)

Balleclauane (1507) *Balleclauane* (1509) *Balechclavane* (1614) *Balechclaven* (1627) *Balleclavan* (1631) *Bellieclevan* (1662) *Bellieclaven* (1665) *Ballaclavane* (1686) *Ballechlaven* (1722) *Balichaven* (1733) *Balachlaven* (1741) *Balliclaven* (1749) *Ballyclavan* (M)

Etymology: G *baile* (f) + *Clemhan* (m)

Although the generic here is G *baile*, the specific is not quite so transparant. Both Maceacharna (1976:114) and Gillies (1906:145) favoured G *clamhan* (m), 'buzzard or kite'. However, buzzards and kites are now rare in Islay (Ogilvie 2002:37) and whether they were ever particularly conspicuous on this holding is impossible to say. Maceacharna's (1976:114) alternative of ON *klofi* (m), 'cleft', might seem more convincing given the location of the current farm-buildings in the cleft between Cnoc Dhiarmaid and Cnoc an Tighe. Significantly, however, this erstwhile cleft is not 'closed at the upper end', making it a *dalr* rather than a *klofi* in ON topographic terminology (CVC:343). With all things considered, Thomas' (MS) suggestion of G **Baile Chleamhain*, 'Clement's township'seems most likely.

Associations:

Capella de Ilanelegane, videlicet Balleclauane (1507) *Capella de Ylane Inlagane, videlicet Balleclauane* (1509) *Bellieclevan, Ardnahau* (1662) *Towlint and Bellieclaven Ardnahave* (1665) *Keppullis, Robollis and Ballaclavane* (1686) *Ballechlaven and Robols* (1722) *Balichaven & Robolls* (1733) *Balachlaven and Robulls* (1741)

Antiquities:

The **dun** of **Cnoc Na Buaile Faide** (NMRS:NR36NE 17) is almost immediately to the SE of the farm buildings.

Context:

Dùn Chollapus lies approx. 1.4km to the WNW (see notes on Duisker below)

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Balleachdrach [ˌb̥al ˈiːax.d̥rɑx]

NR 422 652

Balleachdracht (1499) *Ballechtarroch* (1507) *Ballechteroch* (1509) *Ballecrauch* (1541a) *Ballecraucht* (1541b) *Baleichtrae* (1545) *Balleatrach* (1558) *Balicrach* (1654) *Ballecrayche* (1614) *Ballecrauch* (1627) *Balleichtrach* (1631) *Belliecrauch* (1662) *Balliecrauch* (1665) *Ballichterach* (1686) *Balluchturk* (1722) *Baliochdrach* (1749) *Balierauch* (M)

Etymology: G *baile (m)* + *iochdarach* (adj)

G **Baile iochdarach*, 'netherton' (Thomas MS; Gillies 1906:206). The use of a divisional affix here points to the seperation of this farm-district from a larger estate. Judging by the associations in the early rentals, the parent holding also included Ardachie (see above), *c.* 1.5km SW on **Abhainn a' Bhail' Iochderaich.** At *c.* 135m OD, Ardachie is approx 70m 'higher' than Balleachdrach. Alternatively and given the association in the 1722 rental, it is possible that Balleachdrach was named in relation to the more prestigious centre of Lossit. The current farm-buildings at Lossit are *c.* 1km to the WNW and at *c.* 120m OD, some 60m higher than Balleachdrach.

Associations:

Balleachdracht, Balleclach, Ardacht (1499) *Ballechtarroch, Ardauch et Ballechlachag* (1507) *Ballechteroch, Ardache, et Balleclachag* (1509) *Proak. Ballecrauch* (1541a) *Proak, Ballecraucht* (1541b) *Proak, Ballecrayche* (1614) *Ballecrauch* (1627) *Balleichtrach and Auchvernach* (1631) *Arrevanarie, Poras, Balliecrauch and Cragapols* (1665) *Ballichterach and Ballaclach* (1686) *Losset, Gertontibbert, Gortenles, Kilsleaveens, Balluchturk, Balleclach, Kilmenie and Turmagan* (1722)

Antiquities:

The **dun** of **Lon Broach II** (NMRS:NR46SW 5) lies approx. 800m to the SW.

Context:

Port Bhoraraic and Rubha Bhoraraic are *c.* 800m to the ENE (see notes on above). **Dùn Bhorariach** lies approx. 800m to the NW (see notes on Lossit below).

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Ballighillan [ˌb̥a.lɪ. ˈjiːʔlɪŋ]

NR 408 696

Ballegilzeane (1507) *Ballegilyean* (1509) *Ballegelane* (1541a) *Ballegelane* (1541b) *Balligillane* (1562) *Balgillane* (1563) *Ballegillen* (1584) *Ballegelane* (1614) *Ballegelan* (1627) *Ballegizean* (1631) *Belliegelin* (1662) *Belliglin* (1665) *Ballezeillan* (1686) *Ballegeillen* (1722) *Balychillen* (1733) *Ballegillean* (1741) *Ballegillean* (1741) *Balighillin* (1749) *Balligillan* (M)

Etymology: G *baile (m)* + *Gillán* (m)

Maceacharna (1976:86) suggests that the terminal onomastic unit in this name is ON **Gillin* – a definite plural of ON *gil* (n), 'gulley, ravine'. There are, however, two problems with this explanation. First, the definite form implied by Maceacharna would be either nominative or accusative. But with place-names generally we would expect the dative (=locative) case ending – *ie.* ON **Giljunum.* Second, and even more problematic, there are no conspicuous gullies in this area. It is safer to assume, therefore, that both the generic and the specific in this name are G. While the local belief in derivation from G **Baile ghillean*, 'the lads' township' agrees with both pronunciation and spelling, it seems rather contrived. Considering Joyce's (1920:87-9) conclusions on the Irish cognates in Limerick, Wexford, Derry and Westmeath, it is more likely that Ballighillan in Islay is derived from G **Baileghiolláin*, 'Gillan's township'.

Antiquities:

None. However, the chapel of Cill Eileagain, with which Ballighillan is associated in 1507 and 1509, is located in the neighbouring holding of Mulreesh.

Associations:

Killezegane et Ballegilzeane (1507) *Kileyegan et Ballegilyean* (1509) *Ballelewand Ardinhow, Ballegelane* (1541a) *Ballelewand, Ardinow. Ballegelane* (1541b) *Ballelewane Ardinhow, Ballegelane* (1614) *Ballegizean and Geltak* (1631) *Balychillen* (1733) *½ Ballegillean, Portnellan* (1741)

Context:

Cnoc Abhail lies about 1km to the E (see notes on Balulive below).

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Ballimartin [ˌb̥alɪ ˈvɛːrtəŋ]

'Ballemartine a good possession, although a small holding' (1722)

NR 370 661

Ballemertine (1631) *Ballamartine* (1686) *Ballemartine* (1722) *Balymertin* (1733) Ballemartin, *Knock Clerock* (1741) *Balimartin* (1749) *Ballymartin* (M)

Etymology: G *baile (m)* + *Martan* (m)

G **Baile Mhartain*, 'Martin's towland'. According to Joyce (1920:105), this name is common in Ireland.

Interestingly, Ballimartin in Islay is not recorded in the rentals until 1631, when it appears to take the place of a now lost *Stainepoll* (1627), from ON **Steinabólstaðr*, 'stoney farm' (*cf.* Gammeltoft 2001:152; Maceacharna 1976:86; Marwick 1952:86).[245] Although Thomas (MS) had previously explained the disappearance of Stainepoll as a result of its translation into Auchnaclach (presumably from G **Achadh na Chlach* 'stoney field'), this is problematic for two reasons. Whereas *Stynybollis* is listed between *Lek* and *Dowaskir* in the rentals of 1507 and 1509; follows Ochtevelan in the Retours entry from 1662; and Ochtovelan in 1665 Charter of Novodamus – exactly where we would expect to find Ballimartin – Auchnaclach is located between Kiells and Scanistle, more than 4km to the NE. For such a translation to have been possible would moreover imply Norse-Gaelic bilingualism as late as 1665, which hardly seems likely. It is safe to assume, therefore that the change from Stainepoll to Ballemertine reflects a change in ownership or tenantry of the farm-district and a change in its fiscal centre at some point in the early 17th century.

Associations:

Keappols moir, Keappols beg, Kayean, Karobols, Keirreishlaich, Balola, Duaskir, Ballemertine (1631) *Dowaskir and Ballamartine* (1686) Ballemartin, *Knock Clerock* (1741)

Context:

Abhainn Gleann Mhàrtuin, flows through **Gleann Mhàrtuin** before becoming the river **Sorn** some 750m to the S (see notes on Surn in Killarrow).

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[245] Stanelous (1499) Stanapolis (1507) Stynybollis (1509) Stanepoll (1541a) Stanepoll (1541b) Staynbolshay (1562) Staynbolsay (1563) Staynabolse (1584) Stanepolls (1614) Stainepoll (1627) Stanepoll (1662) Stanepoll (1665). Although the 1662 and 1665 forms of this name post-date the first appearance of Ballimartin, they seem to represent a separate MS tradition, distinct from local usage, from which Ballimartin has remained absent.

Ballyclach [ˌbalɪ ˈxlɑx]

NR 416 642

Balleclach (1499) *Ballechlachag* (1507) *Balleclachag* (1509) *Balleclauchane* (1541a) *Balleclauch* (1541b) *Balleclauchauch* (1545) *Balleclach* (1558) *Balleclauchane* (1614) *Balleclauchin* (1627) *Balleclach* (1631) *Bellieclachen* (1662) *Ballaclach* (1686) *Balleclach* (1722) *Baliclach* (1749) *Ballyclach* (M)

Etymology: G *baile* (m) + *clach* (m) OR *clachach* (adj)

G **Baile chlachach*, 'stoney farm' (*cf.* Gillies1906:194).

Associations:

Balleachdracht, Balleclach, Ardacht (1499) *Ballechtarroch, Ardauch et Ballechlachag* (1507) *Ballechteroch, Ardache, et Balleclachag* (1509) *Balleclauchane* (1614) *Balleclauchin* (1627) *Balleclach and Arrivogan* (1631) *Ballichterach and Ballaclach* (1686) *Losset, Gertontibbert, Gortenles, Kilsleaveens, Balluchturk, Balleclach, Kilmenie and Turmagan* (1722)

Antiquities:

The **dun** of **Lon Broach I** (NMRS:NR46SW 2) lies about 250m to the ESE. Although Lon Broach II is only 250m to the NNE, the presence of a natural dyke between this monument and the farm buildings suggest that it probably lay within the bounds of the neighbouring holding of Balieruach.

Context:

Port Bhoraraic and **Rubha Bhoraraic** are *c.* 1.8km to the NE (see notes on Lossit below).

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Ballygrant [ˌbalɪ ˈɣraːnə]

'Ballegrand a good compact auchten part alike good for sowing & stock, and has now erected a changehous in it without any rent for the same' (1722)

NR 395 662

Ballegrane (1507) *balleograne* (1509) *Ballargrannaye* (1562) *Baillegrana* (1563) *Ballegrana* (1584) *Ballogrand* (1631) *Ballagrand* (1686) *Ballegrand* (1722) *Balygrand* (1733) *Ballegran* (1741) *Baligrant* (1749) *Ballygrant* (M)

Etymology: G *baile (m)* + *gràn* (m)

G **Baile a'ghràin*, 'townland of the (kiln-dried) corn' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:92; Gillies 1906:145)

Associations:

Tua Capolis et Ballegrane (1507) *de duobus Capollis et balleograne* (1509) *Ballargrannaye* (1562) *Baillegrana* (1563) *Ballegrana* (1584) *Ballogrand* (1631) *Ballagrand* (1686) *Myln of Ballagrand* (1686) *Ballegrand* (1722) *Myllne of Ballegrand* (1722) *Balygrand* (1733) *Ardachie, Ballegran with Mill and Changehouse* (1741) *Baligrant* (1749)

Antiquities:

A parish church for the northern part of the conjoined parish of Kilarrow and Kilmeny was built here in the early 19th century. In 1849, the region became the *quod sacra* parish of Kilmeny (NMRS:NR36NE 20).

RCAHMS records a **crannog** in **Loch Ballygrant** about a kilometre to the ENE of the present village (NMRS:46NW 19.00).

Context:

Dùn Ghùaidhre lies approx. 1.5km to the SW (see notes on Àiridh Ghuaidhre above and Kilmeny below).

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Balole [ˌbal'oːlə]

'Balleola a very good possession for sowing and stock and hay' (1722)

NR 355 661

Balola (1541a) *Ballola* (1541b) *Balola* (1614) *Ballola* (1627) *Balola* (1631) *Bellola* (1662) *Bellolae* (1665) *Ballolo* (1686) *Balleolla* (1722) *Balol* (1733) *Ballool* (1741) *Balole* (1749) *Balloal* (M)

Etymology: G *baile (m)* + **Ola* (m)

G **Baile Ola*, 'Ola's township' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:114; Gillies 1906:145). As the personal name here derives from a variant of ON Óláfr (NID:800-14), the name as a whole is unlikely to predate the Viking Age.

Associations:

Ellenynegane, Stinchaw, Balola (1541a) *Ellamyngane, Stinschaw, Ballola* (1541b) *Ellenygall, Stinschaw, Balola* (1614) *Keappols moir, Keappols beg, Kayean, Karobols, Keirreishlaich, Balola, Duaskir,*

Ballemertine (1631) *Stinschaw, Bellolae and Bar* (1665) *Ballolo* (1686) *Balleolla and Leick* (1722) *Balol & Leek* (1733) *Ballool and Leek* (1741)

Context:

Cnoc Goirtein Bhólsaich [ˈkrɔːxk ˌgoːʈtʃɛŋ ˈvoːlsɑx], G for 'the hill of the little enclosure of *Bólsach', and **Gortean Bòlsach** [ˌgoːʈtʃɛŋ ˈvoːlsɑx], 'the little enclosure of *Bólsach', are both *c.* 700m to the NW. The final onomastic unit in both of these place-names appears to contain the ON generic *bólstaðr*, in the form /bols(a)/ (see notes on Bolsa below). It is not clear, however, whether the *bólstaðr* in question has anything to do with the nearby Skarabus (see below), the ruined Iron Age fortification of Dùn Chollapus near Duisker (see below) or whether it represents a borrowing of the word and subsequent appellative usage into the local dialect of Gaelic.

The stream-name **Abhainn Ath a' Mharchaichd** [ˌavɪŋ ˌaː ə ˈvarəkətʃ], some 600m to the SW, is potentially even more interesting. Although the construct is G for 'the river of the ford or field of *Mharchaichd', it is possible that the terminal onomastic unit derives from a Norse original. As the stream in question forms the boundary between the farm-districts of Yorabus and Ballimartin and more significantly, the later parishes of Kilarrow and Kilmeny, it is conceivable that 'Mharchaichd' derives from ON *mörk* (f), 'marches, border, boundary', in the compound form **Mark(ar)á*, 'the river of the boundary', with the addition of a possible G locative /aichd/ (*cf.* Gillies 1906:153; Watson 1904:xxxiv). The element 'mark/ mörk' *etc.* is common not only in Norwegian farm-, district- and region-names, but also in the names of topographical features denoting boundaries – such as forests, stones and rivers (NSL:216; Jakobsen 1936:85). The analgoues Markåna and Markåni, in central Norway (NR II:399) preserve oblique, definite forms of ON **Mark(ar)á*, 'boundary river'.

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Balulive [ˌb̥al ˈɯːlɪv]

'Balleuf is down of the rent 33lb. 13sh. 4d' (1722)

NR 405 699

Balleulife (1507) *Balluleif* (1509) *Ballelew* (1541a) *Ballelew* (1541b) *Ballevlane* (1562) *Balwlbe* (1563) *Bawvoline* (1584) *Ballelewane* (1614) *Ballelew* (1627) *Balliulf* (1631) *Ballulif* (1686) *Balleuf* (1722) *Balulve* (1733) *Balulve* (1741) *Balulve* (1749) *Baluive* (M)

Etymology: G *baile (m)* + **Uilbh* (m)

G **Baile Uilbh*, 'Uilbh's township' (see Maceacharna 1976:114; Gillies 1906:145). As with Balole above, the personal name here is a borrowing from Norse, in this case a variant of ON *Úlfr* (NID:1054-6), an as such is unlikely to pre-date the Viking Age.

Associations:

Ardinho et Balleulife (1507) *Ardinho et Balluleif* (1509) *Ballelewand Ardinhow, Ballegelane* (1541a) *Ballelewand, Ardinow. Ballegelane* (1541b) *Ballelewane Ardinhow, Ballegelane* (1614) *Ballelewand-Ardinhow* (1627) *Ballulif and Kollelagan* (1686) *Balulve, Nether Stensha ½, ½ Skerrols and Avenvogie, Upper Stunsha* (1741)

Context:

Cnoc Ghuirasdeal is nearby; **Loch Staoisha** lies approx. 850m to the N (see notes on Stoinsha below); and **Cnoc Abhail** [ˌkrɔ:xk ˈa:vɪl] (147m) *c.* 1.3km to the ESE. It is possible that the terminal onomastic unit 'Abhail' in this last name derives from an earlier ON **Á(r)fjall*, 'hill of the river'. Various examples of 'Å(r)fjellet' *etc.* can be found in southern and central Norway (NR II:762 & 759; NR III:612, 614). An alternative explanation might be ON **Á(r)fall*, meaning 'the river through the slid land'. NG lists an Aarfald in Nordre Trondhjems amt, which Rygh derives from ON **Á(r)fall*, 'the river through the slid land'.[246] ON *fall*, used in the sense of 'land which has fallen or slid', is not uncommon in Norwegian place-names (NG 15:189). According to NSL (103), it is also used in the sense of land formally covered with trees, which have since been felled to bring it under cultivation.

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Bolsa [ˈb̥o:lsa / ˈb̥oʔə̆l.s'ə]

'Bolsa, Cove, and Ardnahew, being a quarter and one leurheis land, wadset at 3550 merks, being a very good wadset' (1722)

NR 386 775

Spulse (1507) *Polsy* (1509) *Bolsay* (1541a) *Bolsay* (1541b) *Bolse* (1542) *Bole* (1631) *Bolsay* (1665) *Bolsay* (1614) *Bow (vel Bols)* (1615) *Bolsay* (1627) *Bolsay* (1662) *Bols* (1686) *Bolsa* (1722) *Bolsa* (1733) *Bolsa* (1741) *Bolsa* (1749) *Bolsa* (M)

Etymology: ON *bólstaðr* (m)

Simplex ON **Bólstaðr*, meaning 'farm' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:86; Gillies 1906:223). There is a possibility that the initial /s/ in the 1507 *Spulse* reflects a lost specific or at least its genitive allomorph. But as this type of contraction does not appear to have taken place in any of the other Norse names, we might guess that Bolsa has always lacked a specific element.

Although Gammeltoft (2001:96-7) concurs with this etymology, he is keen to stress how much the source forms differ from their Hebridean cognates. While ON /-lst/ usually loses /l/ in the Hebridean context, it is the /t/ which is dropped from unstressed /st/ in Islay's *–bólstaðr* names (*cf.* Cox 1994:59; Seip 1955:155; and their analysis of *Bosta* in Uig parish, Lewis). The uncompounded use of this element is relatively common amongst *bólstaðr* names in Norway (Gammeltoft 2001).

[246] Åfall also occurs in 2 formally secondary names in S Norway (NR I:705).

Associations:

Spulse et eujusdam partis de Skaulastoll (1507) *Polsy et de parte de Scanlastole* (1509) *Bolsay and Overnag* (1541a) *Bolsay and Overnag* (1541b) *Bolsay and Overnag* (1614) *Bolsay et Overnag* (1627) *Bolsay et Ovirmag* (1662) *Bolsay and Overmage* (1665) *Bols* (1686) *Bolsa, Uaberneik, and Ardnahew* (1722) *Bolsa, Dudil and Cove* (1733) *Killinallan, Corsabolls and Bolsa* (1741)

Antiquities:

The **promontory fort** at **Rubha Bhollsa** (NMRS:NR37NE 4) is approx. 850m to the NW of the farm buildings; and the **dun** at **Port An T-sruthain** (NMRS:NR37NE 2) is situated some 550m to the NE, presumably near the border with Cove. It guards the pass between the cliffs of Beinn a'Bhorrain and the sea which links Bolsa with Cove.

Context:

The summit of **Mala Bholsa** ['ma:la ˌvo:l.sa] is approx. 700m to the W of the farm buildings; **Rubha Bhollsa** ['ru:ʔ ə. ˌvo:l.sə] about 900m to the NW; and **Loch Smigeadail** *c.* 1.8km to the SSW (see notes on Margadale below).

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Carnbeg [ˌkarn ˈb̥ihkʲ]

'Carnebeg a very small compact good possession for stock and sowing' (1722)

NR 416 678

Octocarne (1509) *Oktonkerne* (1509) *Carmbeg* (1631) *Carnbeg* (1686) *Carnebeg* (1722) *Carnbeg* (1733) *Carnbeg* (1741) *Carnbeg* (1749) *Carnbeg* (M)

Etymology: G *càrn* (m) + *beag* (adj)

G **Càrn beag*, 'little cairn' (*cf.* Thomas MS). Where or what the cairn in question may have been is unclear. There are, however, numerous rocky outcrops in the vicinity.

Context:

The waterfall known as **Eas forsa** lies about 1km to the ESE on the opposite side of Loch Alla. While this construct is G, with the first element *eas* (m), meaning 'waterfall', the final onomastic unit is clearly ON **forsá*, 'waterfall river'. *Fosså, forselva etc.* are common river-names in Norway (*cf.* NSL:114-5), with NR listing numerous farms and topographical features beginning with the element *fors*, 'rapid/ waterfall' (NR I:142-5:NR II:118-20:NR III:138-141). NG also lists Forsaa ytre and Forsaa indre in Tromø amt.

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Cill Sleabhan [ˌkʲil ˈsleːivə̆ŋ]

NR 421 673

Tua Kilslevane (1507) *Dun Kilslevane* (1509) *Kinslaven* (1631) *Kilstavens* (1686) *Kilsleaveens* (1722) *Kilslevan* (1749) *Kilslevan* (M)

Etymology: G *cill (f)* + *Slemhin* (m)

G **Cill Sleimhin*, 'Slemhin's Church' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:53). Slébhine was an abbot of Iona who died on the second of March 767 (Watson 1926:309).

Associations:

Tua Kilslevane (1507) *Dun Kilslevane* (1509) *Kinslaven* (1631) *Kilstavens (sic), Over and Nather* (1686) *Losset, Gertontibbert, Gortenles, Kilsleaveens, Balluchturk, Balleclach, Kilmenie and Turmagan* (1722) *Kilslevan* (1749)

Antiquities:

The remains of the **chapel** of **Cill Sleabhan**, which measure *c.* 8.3m ENE-WSW by 5.7m externally over walls *c.* 1m thick, lie tightly enclosed within a dry-stone wall approx. 300m to the NE of the farm-buildings (NMRS:NR46NW 3).

Context:

Eas forsa is about 1km to the ENE (see notes on Carnbeg above). **Port Bhoraraic** and **Rubha Bhoraraic** are about 1.5km to the SSE; and **Dùn Bhoraraic** lies approx. 1.3km to the SSW (see notes on Lossit below).

***

*Cove [No phonetics]

[NR 40 78]

Overnag (1541a) *Overnag* (1541b) *Overnag* (1614) *Overnag* (1627) *Ovirmag* (1662) *Overmage* (1665) *Wavernak* (1686) *Cove* (1733) *Cove* (1741) *Cove* (1749) *Cove* (M) *Uavar* (1801) *Unvar* (1832)

Etymology: ON *yfir* (adj) + *vík* (m)

Examination of the rentals suggests that MacDougall's 'Cove' is a development form 'Overnag', most probably though misreading or poor transcription of earlier forms – *eg.* Bolsa &Overnag > Covernag > Cove. The location of this holding at the northern extremity of Islay points to derivation from ON

Yfirvik*, 'the upper bay'. The sandy bay of **Bàgh an Dà Dhoruis, G for 'the bay of the two doors' is not only the largest and most accessible landing point in this holding, but also the most northerly example of its kind in Islay. Given that **Bàgh an Dà Dhoruis** contains the ON loanword *vágr*, 'bay' (*cf.* Cox 2002:110) and is therefore unlikely to pre-date the island's Norse period, it can probably be seen as a G replacement for an earlier ON **Yfirvik*.

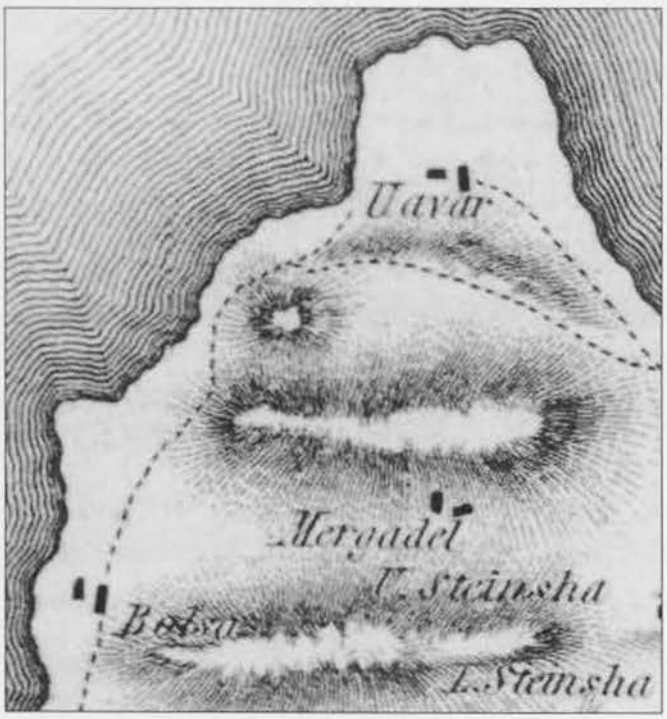

Figure 78: Cove or 'Uavar' on Langland's 1801 map of Argyllshire

Although NR (II:751) lists one farm called Øvrevik, this is not recorded in NG and thus unlikely to be particularly old or prestigious. The element 'øver-' is nevertheless extremely common in Norwegian place-names. A search for 'øv%' on NG returned 176 hits, almost all of which began with the comparative 'øver', 'upper'.

Associations:

Bolsay and Overnag (1541a) *Bolsay and Overnag* (1541b) *Bolsay and Overnag* (1614) *Bolsay et Overnag* (1627) *Bolsay et Ovirmag* (1662) *Bolsay and Overmage* (1665) *Wavernak* (1686) *Bolsa, Dudil and Cove* (1733) *Ardnahowe and Cove* (1741)

Antiquities:

The **dun** at **Port An T-sruthain** (NMRS:NR37NE 2), situated some 550m to the NE of the farm buildings on Bolsa, may have been within the bounds of Cove.

Context:

The nearby **Rubh' a'Mhàil** is commonly thought to be a G coinage meaning 'the headland of the tax' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:122). It is probably just as likely, however, that the 'Mhàil' part of this name is a G rationalisation of ON *fjall*, 'mountain', in which case the mountain in question would be the highly conspicuous Sgarbh Breac (364m).

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*Dudil

Dovidill (1507) *Dowedill* (1509) *Dudil* (1733)

Etymology: ON *dúfa* (f) + *dalr* (m)

Both Maceacharna (1976:87) and Gillies (1906:226) suggest derivation from ON **Dýdalr*, 'boggy valley'. This explanation certainly agrees with the local topography. It is also reasonably consistent with the early written forms and, if we allow for a certain amount of development in the quality of the vowel in the first syllable, with the current pronunciation. The specfic *dý* (n), 'quaking bog', however, is unknown in Norwegian farm names. This being the case, it is more tempting to see the specific as ON *dúfa* (f), 'pigeon or dove'. Doves of various kinds are common in Islay, but especially the Rock Dove (*Columba livia*) which still 'breeds widely in coastal caves and ruined buildings' (Ogilvie 2003:48). There are numerous coastal caves in the vicnity of Doodilbeg, and several conspicuous rocky outcrops near Doodilmore. While there do not appear to be any other **Dúfudalr* farms in Norway or the Norse colonies, NR does list several topographic features with names containing the compound *Dudal* (NR III:85).

Associations:

Dovidill et Tyeid (1507) *Dowedill et Tyd* (1509) *Bolsa, Dudil and Cove* (1733) *Orepole. Dowdilmoir* (1541a) *Orepols, Dowdilmore* (1541b) *Dowdilmoir, Orepols* (1614), *Cultorsay, Lorgba, Grymsay, Gylin and Dowdillmoir* (1686) *Octomore, Grimsey, Coultersay & Lergba, Dudellmoir, Gylyne, Changehouse, malt-kilne, and Miln of Skibo* (1741)

Doodilmore [ˌd̥ɯʔd̥ʌɬ ˈmoːr]

NR 367 741

Dowdilmoir (1541a) *Dowdilmore* (1541b) *Dowdelbeg* (1562) *Dowdelmoir* (1562) *Dowdullmoir* (1563) *Dudillmoir* (1584) *Dowdilmoir* (1614) *Dowdilmoir* (1627) *Dudid moir* (1631) *Dudilmoir* (1686) *Dowdillmoir* (1686) *Dudellmoir* (1741) *Dudlemore* (1749) *Dudilmore* (M)

Associations:

Orepole. Dowdilmoir (1541a) *Orepols, Dowdilmore* (1541b) *Dowdilmoir, Orepols* (1614) *Ochtomoir, Cultorsay, Lorgba, Grymsay, Gylin and Dowdillmoir* (1686) *Octomore, Grimsey, Coultersay & Lergba, Dudellmoir, Gylyne, Changehouse, malt-kilne, and Miln of Skibo* (1741)

Antiquities:

Although the **fort** at **Sgairail** (NMRS:NR37NW 1) is about 600m from Dudilbeg, it is difficult to say whether it would have fallen within the bounds of Dudilbeg or Dudilmore.

Context:

The **Doodilmore River** flows past Dudilbeg *c.*150m to the W; the hillside known as **Sgairail** ['sk'iereɪl] or ['ska:rɪʌə̆] lies approx. 1.5km to the NNE; and the peak of **Sgarbh Dubh** (294m) approx 1.25km to the NNE. Macaeacharna (1976:122) derives Sgairail from an earlier but unspecified ON name meaning 'the hill at the edge'. Gillies (1906:148) on the other hand sees both Sgairail and Sgrabh Dubh, as figurative applications of G *sgarbh* (m), 'cormorant', in the same way that we find *faoileann* and *feannag* in Islay place-names.[247] If this were the case, the origins of *sgarbh* as a borrowing from ON *skarfr* (m), 'cormorant', would preclude coinage before the Viking Age. It is also possible, however, that the current *Sgarbh has arisen through confusion with an earlier ON **Skarv* (*cf.* Jakobsen 1936:97). While the ON bird-name *skarfr* is not particularly well-attested in Norwegian place-names, the names Skarva and Skarven – denoting 'naked hill tops' are common (NSL:278) and aptly desriptive of Sgarbh Dubh in Islay.

Doodilbeg [ˌd̥ɯʔd̥ʌ̆ɬ ˈb̥ihkʲ]

NR 345 748

Dowdelbeg (1562) *Dowdullbeg* (1563) *Dudillbeg* (1584) *Dudid beg* (1631) *Ballinnois, Gortentyd, and Dowdillbeg, with the kyn land of Keanrasary* (1686) *Dudlebeg* (1749) *Dudilbeg* (M)

Associations:

Ballionoig, Gortentead, Dudid beg (1631) *Ballinnois, Gortentyd, and Dowdillbeg, with the kyn land of Keanrasary* (1686)

Antiquities:

The **dun** of **Doodilbeg** lies approx. 700m to the W of the remains of the farm itself (NMRS:NR37SW 4).

Context:

The **Doodilmore River** flows past Dudilbeg *c.* 200m to the W. and on into the sea; the hillside known as **Sgairail** *c.* 2km to the NE and the hilltop of **Scarbh Dubh** slightly further to the E (see above).

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[247] The Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*) is still a relatively common sight around Islay's coasts (Ogilvie 2002:31).

Duisker [ˈd̪ɯːɪskɪr]

'Duaesker a good possession' (1722)

NR 361 669

Doweskir (1499) *Dowaskir* (1507) *Dowasker* (1509) *Doweskkir* (1541a) *Doweskkir* (1541b) *Darosgir* (1562) *Dowasgir* (1563) *Dowaskir* (1584) *Doweskir* (1614) *Dweskir* (1627) *Duaskir* (1631) *Dowaskir* (1686) *Duaeskeir; Duaesker* (1722) *Duisker* (1733) *Duisker* (1749) *Duisker* (M)

Etymology: ON *dúfa* (f) + *sker* (n)

There have previously been several attempts to interpret this name, some of which are more convincing than others. While Gillies' (1906:146) proposed a morphemically appropriate G **Dubh+uisge+ir*, 'the black Water', he also conceded that the element *-ir* is not a common river ending in G. Conversely, while Thomas' (MS) suggestion of ON **Dýsgarðr*, 'cairn enclosure', is grammatically possible, derivation of the generic from ON *garðr* (m) is not supported by the written forms, which we might expect to have been realised as **garraidh* in G (*cf.* Stewart 2004:410). Maceacharna's (1976:89) explanation of Duisker as ON **Dysjarsker*, 'cairn rock', provides a more convincing generic. Although ON *sker* (n) is usually applied to maritime features in Norway – *ie.* 'skerries' – it can also denote low, isolated hilltops (Indl:75). In the case of Duisker, there is a conspicuous rocky outcrop less than 200m to the E of the present farm-buildings which would provide the pre-requisite *sker*. Nevertheless, the initial vowel-sound suggested by an earlier ON **Dysjarsker*, or more probably **Dysker* (*cf.* Chapter 6), is hard to reconcile with the modern [ˈd̪ɯːɪskɪr].

Figure 79: Duisker from the S

Given the rocky outcrop mentioned above and the possibility that it was used as a roost by nesting rock-doves (see notes on *Dudil above), it is perhaps more likely that the original specific was ON *dúfa* (f), 'pigeon, dove', and the compound ON **Dúfusker* 'rock-dove rock'. A search for 'dúfa' on NG returned 22 hits including a Dueskar, in Søndre Trondhjems amt, which Rygh interprets as ON *dúfa* + *skarð*, 'notch in mountain'. As can be seen from Figure 79, however, there are no particularly dramatic 'notches' in the landscape near the current farm-buildings at Duisker.

Associations:

Doweskir, Kaloharwuch, Stanelous (1499) *Keappols moir, Keappols beg, Kayean, Karobols, Keirreishlaich, Balola, Duaskir, Ballemertine* (1631) *Dowaskir and Ballamartine* (1686)

Antiquities:

The turf covered remains of the ancient **chapel** of **Duisker I** lie approx. 700m to the SE of the farm buildings. The building appears to have covered an area of *c.* 8.5m ENE-WSW by *c.* 5.5m externally, with walls about 1m thick and been situated at the centre of the ESE wall of a roughly triangular graveyard measuring *c.* 22m N-S and *c.* 23m internally (NRMS:NR36NE 1).

The similarly ruinous remains of the **chapel** known as **Duisker II**, 5.2m ENE-WSW by 4.4m externally over walls about 80cm thick, lie within a roughly circular enclosure about 200m to the SW of the modern farm buildings. 5.2m ENE-WSW by 4.4m externally over walls about 80cm thick (NMRS:NR36NE 2).

Dùn Chollapus is situated approx. 1km to the NNW (NMRS:NR36NE 15). This fortification appears to have been named for a now lost ON **Kollabólstaðr*, 'Kolli's steading' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:225). Contrary to the suggestion made by Gammeltoft (2001:108), it its unlikely to be linked to Coulabus in Kilchoman (see above).

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Eacharnach [ˈɛːxərnax]

NR 410 642

Echvernoch (1507) *Ewchwarnoch* (1509) *Auchvernach* (1631) *Auchvernach* (1686) *Eachvarnach* (1749) *Eachvarnach* (M)

Etymology: G *each* (m) + *ach* (adj)

G *each* (m), 'horse', with the suffix *ar(n)ach* (Gillies 1906:146), giving a meaning of 'place of the horses' and referring perhaps to horse breeding activity.

Associations:

Echvernoch et Gortane (1507) *Ewchwarnoch et Gortane* (1509) *Balleichtrach and Auchvernach* (1631) *Auchvernach and Arivryan* (1686)

Context:

Loch Bharradail and **Allt Loch Bharradail** is *c.* 1.75km to the WSW (see notes on Daill in Killarrow Parish)

Esknish [ˈeːskˌniʃ]

NR 367 647

Eskillis (1499) *Eskillis* (1507) *Erskillis* (1509) *Eskillis* (1562) *Eskillis* (1563) *Eskillis* (1584) *Esknis* (1631) *Esknis* (1686) *Eskeneish* (1722) *Esknish* (1733) *Esknish* (1741) *Esknish* (1749) *Eiskinish* (M)

Etymology: ON *Áskell* (m) + *staðir* (m pl)

Maceacharna's (1976:118) suggestion that Esknish is a pre-Celtic compound conveying a meaning of 'water meadow' seems fanciful; as does Thomas' (MS) suggested basis in G *easg* (f), 'a narrow marshy ditch' – an unlikely name for an important farm-district. Perhaps a more plausible explanation given the early written forms is ON **Áskellsstaðir*, 'Áskell's steading'. While the only real difficulty here is the terminal [ʃ], this could be explained as extreme contraction of terminal ON *–staðir* (*cf.* the [s'a] and [s'ɪːɣ] shown elsewhere in this appendix), followed by lenition of the clustered terminal, genitive /s/ of '*Áskells*' and initial /s/ of '*staðir*' through contact with an epenthetic vowel.

A search for 'Áskell' on NG returned 8 hits, including an Askestad in Buskeruds amt, which Rygh interprets as Aski's farm (with Aski being a pet-form of the personal-name Askell, Asgaut or Asgeirr).

Associations:

Ourebulsche, Eskillis (1499) *Eskillis et Robolls* (1507) *Erskillis et Orobollis* (1509)

Antiquities:

Although the dun of Dùn Bruichlinn (NMRS:NR36SE 4) lies about 1.1km to the SSE, it is more likely to have fallen within the bounds of Dailll as shown on MacDougall's map.

Context:

The modern farm buildings sit in the E bank of the river **Sorn** (see notes on Surn below) where it is joined by **Abhainn Ath a' Mharcaichd** (see notes on Balole above).

***

Finlaggan [fən'ɬaʔg̊ən]

but [ˌpɔrtəɲ 'ʝiːlɪŋ]

NR 393 685

'Portnellan is a large good possession both for sowing & stock; adjacent to a large fresh water loch in quhich there is a chappell and a burial place and the ruines of several other good houses, which was the great M'Donald of Islay his dwelling place and very farmhouse; and adjacent to quhich isle is a little round island quhairin the great M'Donald kept his Cunsell of fifteen seniors, and of quhich the famous Buchanan in his Scots Chronicles gives a large account. And it is alleged that our Scots Councill of 15 Lords was first erected in imitation of the great M'Donald his Councill in the said island' (1722)

Portalanynlagane (1507) *Portalanynlagane* (1507) *Portalane Ynlagane* (1509) *Portallaeynlagane* (1509) *Ellenynegane* (1541a) *Ellamyngane* (1541b) *Ellan Finlagan* (1549) *Portanellane* (1562) *Portnellane* (1563) *Portclenellan* (1584) *Ellenygall* (1614) *Ellenyngall* (1627) *Portnellen* (1631) *Castel of Falinghan or Finlagan* (1654) *Ellienyngall* (1662) *Elenyngill* (1665) *Portnellane* (1686) *Portnellan* (1722) *Portnellan* (1733) *Portnellan* (1741) *Portnellan* (1749) *Portineilan* (M)

Etymology: G *port* (m) + *an* (art) + *eilean* (m)

G **Port an Eilean [Fhindlagan]* 'landing place of the island of St. Findlug' (Watson 1926:304). Although G, this name is unlikely to be ancient. It is not only of the phrasal type considered by Watson (1904:xl-xli) to be late but also formally secondary and thus hardly fitting for a farm-district comprising some of the best arable land in Islay. The name 'Portineilan' is clearly derived from its relationship with the MacDonald stronghold on Eilean Mór. What it might have replaced, however, is impossible to say.

Associations:

Insula S. Finlagani in Yle (1427) *Portalanynlagane* (1507) *Lachtcarlane cum octava parte de Portalanynlagane* (1507) *Lachtcarlane cum octave parte de Portalane Ynlagane* (1509) *Portallaeynlagane* (1509) *Ellenynegane, Stinchaw, Balola* (1541a) *Ellamyngane, Stinschaw, Ballola* (1541b) *Castel of Falinghan or Finlagan* (1654) *Ellienyngall* (1662) *Portclenellan* (1584) *Ellenygall, Stinschaw, Balola* (1614) *Portnellen, Mulris, Kylledo and Quinskirne* (1631)) *Portnellane, Quiskirne, and Kelladow* (1686) *Portnellan, Quenskeir, & Keillado* (1722) *Portnellan* (1733) *½ Ballegillean, Portnellan* (1741)

[*Capella de Ilanelegane, videlicet balleclauane* (1507) *Capella de Ylane Inlagane, videlicet Balleclauane* (1509)]

Antiquities:

The remains of a substantial proto-urban development including a hall, chapel, cobbled streets and numerous other buildings were uncovered during recent excavations on Eilean Mór in Loch Finlaggan (Caldwell & Ewart 1993; RCAHMS 1984:275-81). While the wealth of material remains demonstrate

that Eilean Mór was a site of major historical importance (Caldwell & Ewart 1993; RCAHMS 1984:275-81), it's floruit as a Lordship centre is extremely poorly documented. Without the charters which Alexander Lord of the isles granted here in 1427 and 1432 there would be no reliable documentary evidence for its importance at all (RCAHMS 1984:281). Although the Council of the Isles is thought to have met on Eilean na Comhairle, 'the isle of the council', the earliest detailed account is given by Monro in 1549, some time after it had ceased to function (Monro 2002:310).

The large **chapel** on the island of **Eilean Mór**, measuring *c.* 10.1m E-W by 6.1m over walls *c.* 80cm thick, was associated with the 'royal settlement' of the *Tighearnan nan Eilean*, 'the lords of the Isles'. The open area to the S of this building has been tentatively identified as a **burial ground** by the RCAHMS. The chapel itself, which is about 600m to the SW of the farm buildings at Finlaggan (NMRS:NR36NE 5.00), is likely to be the 'oilen Fionlagain' described in the 17th century *Book of Clanranald* as being one of several churches constructed or reconstructed by John I, Lord of the Isles, who died in 1387 (RCAHMS 1984:281).

There is another site on the NW shore of Loch Finlaggan aprox. 450m from the farm buildings. This was identified in 1878 as the **burial ground** of the 'emasculated women' who are said to have formed part of the household of the Lords of the Isles on Eilean Mòr after their expulsion from the Isle of Man in 1304 (NMRS:NR36NE 4).

Radiocarbon testing of wood recovered from **Eilean nan Comhairle** suggest that the later medieval structures are likely to have been built on top of an Iron Age **Crannog** (Caldwell 2001:172-3).

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Gortantaoid ['ɡoːr̊tʃɪŋ] or [ɡoːr̊təŋ 'tøtʃ]

NR 339 732

'Ballenish and Gortenteid being let to the present Killenailen, quhich is undoubtly the best possession in the countrie' (1722)

Tyeid (1507) *Tyd* (1509) *Teid* (1562) *Teid* (1563) *Tytdie* (1584) *Gortentead* (1631) *Gortentyd* (1686) *Gortenteid* (1722) *Gortented* (1733) *Gortented* (1741) *Gortantoid* (1749) *Gortantoid* (M)

Etymology: G *goirtean* (m) + *taod* (m)

Gillies (1906:148) exlpains this name as G **Goirtean an Taod*, '[the enclosure of the] halter' or possibly G **Goirtean an t-saoid*, '[the enclosure of] the leading of the cattle to the hill pasture'. Both seem contrived. Maceacharna's (1976:101) suggestion of G **Gortan Taoid*, 'field of cords', on the other hand – referring perhaps to nearby cultivation 'rigs' – seems much more reasonable. While the current lack of visible rig and furrow marks is no indication that there never were any, it is possible that the 'cord' in question is the wide ridge which runs northwards from the current farm buildings.

Associations:

Dovidill et Tyeid (1507) *Dowedill et Tyd* (1509) *Ballionoig, Gortentead, Dudid beg* (1631) *Ballinnois, Gortentyd, and Dowdillbeg, with the kyn land of Keanrasary* (1686) *Ballenish & Gortenteid* (1722) *Rim, Balynis and Gortented* (1733) *Reim, Balinish and Gortented* (1741)

Antiquities:

The **promontory fort** of **Gortantoid** lies approx 1.4km to the N of the farm buildings (NMRS:NR37SW3).

Context:

Sornasairidh lies approx 2.4km to the SSE (see notes on Killinallan in Killarrow).

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Keills [ˌxil ˈxaːlʌm]

'Killcalumkill some small thing down of the rent and a good possession' (1722)

NR 415 684

Killcallumkill (1507) *Kilcallumkill* (1509) *Kilchallumkeill* (1631) *Kilcholmkil* (1654) *Kilcalumkill* (1722) *Kilromkill* (1733) *Kilcolmkill* (1741) *Kiells* (1749) *Kilkolumkill* (M)

Etymology: G *cill* (f) + *Callum-Chille* (m)

G **Cill Chaluim-Chille*, 'St Columba's Church' (Maceacharna 1976:52). Columba died in Iona in 597 (Watson 1926:279).

Antiquities:

The remains of the late medieval **chapel** of **Cill Challuim Chille**, measuring approx. 9.4m E-W by 5.7m over walls up to 90cm thick, lie within their burial ground about 300m to the NW of the farm buildings (NMRS:NR46NW 2). A broken medieval cross shaft dating to the 14 or 15th centuries stand slightly further to the NNW (NMRS:NR46NW 1). The earliest records of the chapel itself, however, date to 1503 and 1542, when presentations to the chaplainry show it was held jointly with that of the chapel on Eilean Mór (RCAHMS 1984:161).

The **crannog** in **Loch nan Deala** (NMRS:NR46NW 5) lies about a kilometre to the ENE. The name of the loch, which appears to be G for 'Loch of the division', seems to reflect its location on the border of two administrative units, in the same way that the nearby A846 road now represents the border between the Dunlossit estate and its neighbour to the N (*cf.* Chapter 8)

Context:

Eas forsa is about 1.4km to the SE (see notes on Carnbeg above).

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Kepollsmore [ˌkʲeːpə.sɪg̊ʲ] + [ˈmoːr]

NR 383 661.[248]

Capolse Litil Capolse (1494) *the two keipolse* (1499) *Capolismore* (1507) *Tua Capolis et Ballegrane* (1507) *Capollismoir* (1509) *de duobus Capollis* (1509) *Keppolsmor* (1541b) *Kepolse* (1542) *Keappolsaymoir/ Keappolsaybeg* (1562) *Keppolsaymor/ Keppolsaybeg* (1563) *Kepbolsmoir/ Kepbolsbeg* (1584) *Keppolsmoir, Keppolsbeg* (1614) *Kepollis McKeory* (1614) *Kepols* (1615) *Kepols* (1617) *Keppolsmoir/ Keppolsbeg/ Kelpols [Kapolis]Makeorie* (1627) *Keapols Lachlans Cannach/ Keappols moir, Keappols beg,* (1631) *Keppolsmoir/ Keppolisbeg/ Kepolsmuckean* (1662) *Kepolsmor/ Keppolsbeg* (1665) *Keppullis/ Keppallis* (1686) *Keppals* (1722) *Keppolsmore* (1733) *Kepelsmoir* (1741) *Kepollsmore* (1749) *Keppolsmore* (M)

Etymology: (ON *kappi* m) OR *kjappi* (m) + *bólstaðr* (m)) + G *mór* (adj)

The generic here appears to be ON *bólstaðr* (*cf.* Gammeltoft 2001:128). Although Maceacharna (1976:86) suggests a specific of ON '*kappa*' and a meaning of 'place of the gathering of peoples', it is not entirely clear how he arrives at this conclusion. There are, however, a series of more straightforward alternatives. A search for 'kappi' on NG returned 9 hits, which Rygh interprets as: 'champion' as a man's by-name; the male personal-name *Kappi*; the river-name *Kappa* derived from *köppusteinn* – which is either 'river polished boulders'[249] or 'stone of a particular mineral composition [possibly containing copper, ON *koparr* (m)]' (NG 12:118). At least three of might be acceptable in the case of Keppols in Islay. A further alternative, which provides an even closer fit for the local pronunciation is ON *kjappi* (m) 'billy-goat'. As feral goats are relatively common in Islay today, it is possible that goats generally played a role in the subsistence economy of the Viking Age and provided the inspiration for this name.

Associations:

Skanlastill, Kynbeloquhane, Capolse, Robolse, Litil Capolse, Kilbranne, Dulloch, Ochtownwruch, Arrevore, Correre, Curloch et Alane Mackindow, in insula de Ila (1494) *Tua Capolis et Ballegrane* (1507) *Capollismoir* (1509) *de duobus Capollis et balleograne* (1509) *Keppolsmor. Keppolsbeg, Ballaharvie* (1541b) *Robolse et Kepolse* (1542) *Keppolsmoir, Keppolsbeg, Ballaharvie* (1614) *Robols et*

[248] NB: Although the current OS 1:25000 Explorer map (No. 353) shows Keppolsmore in NR 377 656 and Keppols in NR 383 661, local tradition has the names the opposite way round (E. MacNab pers. commun.). The real nomenclature is corroborated by the location of the fort of Dun Cheapasaidh Mor, which is 1.3km to the NW of Keppolsmore but only c.500m to the NW of Keppols. The spatial data given for 'Keppolsmore' above and in Appendix II will therefore accord with that for Keppols as shown on the OS Explorer map.

[249] The modern Norwegian reflex of ON *köppusteinn* is *koppulstein*, meaning 'small rounded stone' – note the diminutive creating /l/. It is possible that one of the local burns at Keppols had an unsually high volume of pebbles.

Kepols (1615) *Robols et Kepols* (1617) *Keapols Lachlans Cannach Robols* (1631) *Keappols moir, Keappols beg, Kayean, Karobols, Keirreishlaich, Balola, Duaskir, Ballemertine* (1631)) *Keppolsbeg and Bellieharvie* (1665) *Keppullis, Robollis and Ballaclavane* (1686)

Antiquities:

The **fort** of **Dun Cheapasaidh Mor**, the wall of which has been almost entirely destroyed by robbing (NMRS:NR26NE 8), lies approx. 500m to the NW.

Context:

Robolls Hill is *c.* 1km to the NW (see notes on Robolls below); the **River Sorn** flows past about 1.5km to the SW (see notes on Surn in Killarrow); **Abhainn Ath a' Mharcaichd** about 1.4km to the WSW (see notes on Balole above); and **Dùn Ghùaidhre** is about 2km to the WSW (see notes on Kilmeny below).

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Kilmeny [ˌkʲiʎəˈvɛʔɲi]

NR 391 653

Kilmane (1507) *Kilmane* (1509) *Killmheny* (1549) *Kilmenie* (1631) *Ylen Euldagan OR Kilmhem* (1654) *Kilmeny* (1686) *Kilmanie* (1722) *Kilmenie* (1722) *Kilmenie* (1733) *Kilmenny* (1749) *Killmeny* (M)

Etymology: G *cill* (f) + *ma* (prep) + *Eithne* (f)

Thomas' (MS) suggestion of G **Cille a'Mhanaich*, 'the Monk's townland', accords well with the earliest two forms. Following the standard typology of Islay *cill* names, however, we might expect the specific to be a personal name. Watson's (1926:284) offering of G **Cill M'Eithne*, meaning 'My Eithne's church' after Eithne, mother of Columba, provides what is perhaps a better match for the majority of written forms, current local pronunciation and a more appropriate dedication (*cf.* Maceacharna's 1976:50).

Associations:

Ylen Euldagan OR Kilmhem (1654) *Losset, Gertontibbert, Gortenles, Kilsleaveens, Balluchturk, Balleclach, Kilmenie and Turmagan* (1722)

Antiquities:

The remains of the old parish **church** of Kilmeny lie about 200m to the W. The surviving parts of the W and S walls, which measure 3.5 and 5.5m resp. with an average thickness of *c.* 1m, have been dated by the RCAHMS on typological grounds to the later Middle Ages (RCAHMS 1984:216), with a number of **carved slabs** from the graveyard being thought to date from the 14th century (NMRS:NR36NE 7).

Kilmeny was described by Monro in 1549 as one of the four parish churches of Islay (Monro 2002:310). As no earlier references have been identified, it was suggested by RCAHMS (1984:216) that it may have developed as a dependent chapel within the parish of Kilarrow. By 1849, however, this church had been consecrated as the centre of a (*quoad sacra*) parish in its own right (see also Chapter 7).

The presence of the **nucleated fort** of **Dùn Ghùaidhre** (NMRS36SE 9), approx. 400m to the SSW of the modern farm buildings, is a clear indication of the high status enjoyed by this area during the Iron Age. It is of potentially even greater significance, however, that the only two field monuments of this type in Islay are located in the Laggan and Sorn valleys. As these areas contain most of the most fertile land on the island, there is a possibility that both Dùn Ghùaidhre and Dùn Nosebridge represent important cultural or administrative centres.

Context:

Clac an Righ, which is G for 'the ridge of the king', runs along the SE side of Dùn Ghùaidhre. Considering that Godred Crovan, king of Man and the Isles, is traditionally associated with this part of the parish,[250] there is a possibility that he is both the eponymous king and Gùaidhre. On balance, however, it is probably more likely that these names have arisen through a combination of folk etymology and association.

Loch Bharradail and **Allt Loch Bharradail** are about 1.6km to the SE. **Beinn Bharra-dail** is approx 2.1km to the SSE (see notes on Daill in Kilarrow).

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Knocklearoch [ˌkrɔːxkˈliːarɑx]

NR 399 649

'Knockclerich is in Rentall 1644 £10 more of silver rent: allow some presents. In this place is the dwellings of the mynors in the mynes of Isla. The tacksmen of the lead-myns are obliged to pay and to deliver to Calder the seventh part of all clean wassen lead-ore they take up; which they always doe, and compt their mynes by bings; and every bing is thought to be worth about twentie shillings sterling, so that now the accompt of intromission with the said lead oar belonging to Calder will be a considerable article in accompt' (1722)

Knokclere (1507) *Knokclerich* (1507) *Knocklearach* (1631) *Knochclerach* (1686) *Knockclerich* (1722) *Knockcrock* (1733) *Knock Clerock* (1741) *Knocklerock* (1749) *Knocklerock* (M)

Etymology: G *cnoc* (m) + *clèireach (m)*

[250] According to legend, Godred is said to have slain a dragon which had its den at Emaraconart, about 2km to the WNW of Clac an Righ and Dùn Ghùaidhre (*cf.* Earl ND:18).

G **Cnoc Clèireach*, 'Hill of the clerics' (Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:119). Thomas notes two standing stones on this holding known locally as *Na Clerrich*, 'the Clerics' (RCAHMS 1984:69), on which tradition relates the eponymous holy men were hanged. According to Earl (ND:25), it became an Islay saying, of unusually wet or stormy days, that: '*The an Iatha seo cho fiadhaich ris an Iathat a chroch iad no cleirich* (Today is as bad as the day they hanged the clerics)'.

Associations:

Capella Sancte Columbe cum terris ejusdem, videlicet Knokclere et Balleoscheane (1507) *Capella Sancte Columbe cum terris ejusdem, videlicet Knokclerich et Balleoscheane* (1507) *Knocklearach and Balloissin* (1631) *Knochclerach and Baloshin* (1686) *Knockclerich* (1722) *Knockcrock* (1733) Ballemartin, *Knock Clerock* (1741) *Knocklerock* (1749)

Context:

Loch Bharradail and **Allt Loch Bharradail** lie approx. 1.35km to the SSW (see notes on Daill in Kilarrow).

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Leek [ˈʎiːxkʲ / ˈliːxkʲ]

NR 359 652

Lek (1507) *Lek* (1509) *Laik* (1541a) *Laik* (1541b) *Leak* (1562) *Leak* (1563) *Leak* (1614) *Laik* (1627) *Lick* (1662) *Loick* (1665) *Leak* (1686) *Balleolla and Leick* (1722) *Balol* (1733) *Leek* (1741) *Leek* (1749) *Leek* (M)

Etymology: Uncertain: G *leac* (f) OR ON *lækr* (m)

Gillies (1906:152 & 16) suggests G **Leac*, 'a slab of stone or a flat stone', perhaps used figuratively of grave slabs. However, there are no recorded or suspected burial grounds or grave sites in the vicinity and although the ground near the SE extremity of this farm-district is covered in small rocky outcrops, it is difficult to say whether these would have been associated with Leek or the neighbouring farm-district of Ballimartin. An alternative would be to see the name as Norse and deriving from ON **Leikr* or **Lækr*.

According to Rygh (Indl:64-5), ON *leikr* (m) has two very different meanings in Norwegian place-names. The first of these is 'district assembly place', usually combined with ON *vin* (f), 'meadow'. NG lists 45 farm-names in this category, usually encountered as 'Løyken', but pronounced without the terminal /n/. As Leek in Kilmeny is now deserted and not directly connected to the major drove-roads (as shown on MacDougall's map) it seems unlikely to have been a prestige centre of this type.

The second meaning given by Rygh is 'rutting place [for livestock]' (Indl:65), one which may have developed in parody of the other meaning. Although this is theoretically possible in the case of Leek in Kilmeny, the Norwegian cognates are extremely late. It seems more likely, therefore, that if the name were Norse, it would derive from ON *lækr* (f), 'brook, rivulet' (see notes on Leek in Kilchoman). Abhainn Ath a'Mharchaichd (see notes on Balole above) flows past about 300m to the NE and would provide an appropriate stream, if we could be sure that it was associated primarily with Leek and not one of the various other farm-districts bordering on it. Until further evidence comes to light, therefore, the etymology of this name must be considered uncertain.

Associations:

Lek et Stanapolis (1507) *Lek et Stynybollis* (1509) *Leak and Knox* (1562) *Leak and Knockis* (1563) *Leak et KnokisLaik* (1614) *Leak with the upper pairt of Monyvinaskok* (1686) *Balleolla and Leick* (1722) *Balol & Leek* (1733) *Ballool and Leek* (1741)

Context:

Abhainn Ath a' Mharchaichd flows by about 300 to the NE (see notes on Balole above).

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Lossit ['do:siʤ]

NR 412 655

'Losset and the lands belonging to it being a six quarter land is but a very ordinary wadset at 10,000 merks: the present stots aught to be but 4 lib. Scots by his rights. This wadset is very good for stock of all sorts, especially for sheep' (1722)

Lossit (1507) *Lossid* (1509) *Lossit* (1631) *Lossat* (1686) *Loset* (1654) *Losset* (1722) *Losset* (1733) *Lossett* (1741) *Lossit* (1749) *Lossit in Kilmeny Parish* (M)

Etymology: G *losaid* (f)

G **Losaid*, 'a kneading trough'. See notes on Lossit in Kilchoman for further discussion.

Associations:

Lossit cum insula (1507) *Lossid cum insula* (1509) *Lossit, Gartintibert and Gortenendlos* (1631) *Loset* (1654) *Lossat, Gartintiber, and Gortenendlas* (1686) *Losset, Gertontibbert, Gortenles, Kilsleaveens, Balluchturk, Balleclach, Kilmenie and Turmagan* (1722) *Losset & c.* (1733) *Lossett & c.* (1741)

Antiquities:

The **broch** of **Dùn Bhoraraic** (NMRS:NR46SW 10), lies approx. 450m to the NE of the farm buildings, with the bay of **Port Bhoraraic** and the adjacent point of **Rubha Bhoraraic** being a further 1.3km E from the broch. The onomastic unit *Bhoraraic comon to all three of these names derives from ON **Borga(r)vik*, 'the bay of the fort'. Although there is only one attested Borgvika (NRIII:40) in Norway,

the generic 'borg' is relatively common in Norwegian place-names (see also notes on Lossit in Kilchoman).

The **fortified island** in Loch Lossit bears the name Eilean Mhic Iain or 'MacIan's Island'. As the name is first attested in a feu charter registered on 6 April 1576 (RCAHMS 1984:343, §304 n.4), the later medieval appearance of its perimeter wall has been taken by the RCAHMS (1984:154) to indicate that: 'the island takes its name from John MacIan of Ardnamurchan, who in the 1490s [following the forfeiture of the Lordship] became bailie of Islay and received large grants there'.

The remains of a **chapel** and burial ground were recorded on an island in **Loch Lossit** before the level of the loch was raised (NMRS:NR46NW11). The chapel is associated with **St Columba** in the rentals of 1507 and 1509.

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Margadale [ˈmɛrə̆g̊əd̥ɤ̆ɬ]

NR 394 744

Margadill (1562) *Mergadull* (1563) *Mergadull* (1584) *Mergadill* (1631) *Mergadill* (1686) *Mergadill* (1722) *Mergidill* (1741) *Mergavale* (1749) *Mergadel* (M)

Etymology: ON *mörk* (f) + *dalr* (m)

While Thomas (MS) suggests ON **Markað(ar)dalr*, 'the valley of the market' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:74), there is currently no evidence to support such a derivation. Perhaps a more likely explanation, therefore, is ON **Marka(r)dalr*, 'the valley of the boundary' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:234; Indl:68; NSL:216; see also notes on Balole above). Just exactly what that boundary may have been is further discussed in Chapter 8.

Associations:

Keandrochead, Ardnave, Breakauchie, Mergidill, Killnave (1741)

Context:

The summit of **Margadale Hill** (283m) is approx. 900m to the N, **Margadale River** flows eastwards in to the Sound of Jura at Bunnahabhaainn Bay. **Cnoc Sgarabais** is about 1.4km to the SSE (see notes on Stoinsha below).

***

Mulreesh [ˌmʌlˈriːʃ]

NR 403 687

'Melreish and the two Stewinshas was let in 1644 together and pay more rent than now by £24, 15s. 4d., so that Melreish should pay at least now full presents; yet it lackes' (1722)

Mulris (1631) *Mulreis* (1686) *Melreish* (1722) *Milrish* (1733) *Mulreesh* (1749) *Mulrish* (M)

Etymology: G *maol* (m) + *ris* (adj)

The first part of this name is G *maol.* While Gillies (1906:147) interprets this literally as 'tonsured one [= monk]', it is perhaps more likely that the noun is being used figuratively in the sense of 'exposed summit', giving a compound **Maol Ris*, meaning 'slope of the exposed hill' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:121) – an accurate description of the local landscape, at least in the present day.

Associations:

Portnellen, Mulris, Kylledo and Quinskirne (1631)

Antiquities:

The ruins of the **chapel** of **Cill Eileagain**,[251] which measure *c.* 7.5m E-W by *c.* 5m externally over walls *c.* 1m thick, are situated in a burial ground approx. 700m to the N of Mulrish. A 'pillow stone' found at or near this site bears an **incised cross** which could date to between the 9th and 11th centuries. Errors in the interlacing, however, led Lamont to conclude that it was not the work of a professional carver. A number of other grave slabs dating back at least as far as the 14th century have been found in the burial ground surrounding the chapel (NMRS:NR46NW 4).

Context:

The pastureland known as Laoigan [No phonetics] lies about 500m to the E. Given the prominence of the stream Allt an Tairbh, which runs through it, derivation from ON **Lækr,* 'brook' is not unlikely.

***

Persabus [ˈp̊ɛr̊səˌb̥ʌs]

NR 417 690

'The changehouse and malt kiln of Persabols down the rent 4 lib. Scots' (1722)

Barsabolls (1507) *Barsabollis* (1509) *Persebols* (1631) *Persobollis* (1686) *Persabols* (1722) *Persabols* (1722) *Persabolls* (1733) *Persabolls* (1741) *Persabus* (1749) *Persobolls* (M)

Etymology: ON *prestr* (m) + *bólstaðr* (m)

[251] Killezegane et Ballegilzeane (1507) Kileyegan et Ballegilyean (1509)

ON **Prestabólstaðr*, 'the farm of the priest(s)'. As Gammeltoft (2001:142) points out, this derivation is dependent on the metathesis of */r/* and */e/* and the loss of */t/* from the resulting consonant cluster */rst/*. While this is not impossible, Gillies (1906:236) prefers to see the specific as a translation of ON *prestr* to G *pearsa* (m/f), 'a person', in the sense of 'parson'. More likely still, as Gammeltoft concedes, is the probability that the modern forms of this name reflect a partial gaelicisation of ON *prestr*. This need not necessarily mean, however, that the translation took place at 'an early stage of bilingualism' (Gammeltoft 2001:142). The 'translation' might have been no more than a hyper-correctional form of phonemic adaptation, which could have taken place at any point up to and including the creation of the first reference in 1507.

The element 'prest' is not uncommon in Norwegian place-names. A search for 'prest' on NG returned 16 hits. In many cases, as with Presthus, which is found in four places in Trøndelag and a couple of places elsewhere, it is thought to indicate an ecclesiastical estate (NSL:248). Interestingly, however, 'Prest' is also a common first-element in mountain-names (NSL:248).

Associations:

Terebols and Persebols (1631) *Torobollis and Persobollis* (1686) *Changehouse of Persabols* (1722) *Persabolls, ½ Ariguary, Port Askock, changehouse, ferry, malt-kiln, and changehouse of Balochroy* (1741)

Antiquities:

The **dun** of **Dunan** Buidhe, 'the little yellow dun', is situated approx. 350m to the NW of the farm buildings.

Context:

Cnoc Abhail is about 750m to the N (see notes on Balulive above); and **Eas forsa** about 1.7km to the SSE (see notes in Carnbeg above).

***

Port Askaig [ˌpɔrt ˈaskəɡ̊ʲ]

NR 431 692

Eskok (1507) *Askag* (1509) *Eskcok* (1541a) *Eskcog* (1541b) *Escok* (1562) *Eskcok* (1614) *Escok* (1627) *Askok* (1631) *Estiak* (1662) *Askok* (1686) *Port Aiskoige* (1722) *Port Ascock* (1733) *Port Askock* (1741) *Portaskaig* (1749) *Portaskaig* (M)

Etymology: G *port* (m) + (ON *askr* (m) + *vík* (f))

Effectively tautological G *port*, 'bay', prefixed to ON **Askvík*, 'bay of the ash-tree'. Although many fine examples of the species *Fraxinus* can be found in the immediate vicinity today (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:74; Gillies1906:144; Figure 80), these are not thought to be native (see Chapter 1). The survival of native ash-trees on nearby Jura, however, raises the possibility that they once grew in the sheltered, calcareous environs of Port Askaig.

Figure 80: Ash-tree in Port Askaig

As NSL (60) points out, ON *askr* is common as a first element in Norwegian place-names. NG lists 5 farms with names derived from ON **Askvík*, one each in Bratsberg, Jarlsberg og Larviks, Kristians, Nordre Bergenhus and Stavanger amt (*cf.* also notes on Ardenistle in Kildalton). Closer to hand, there is an Ascog on Bute, which is also characterised by its ash trees (A. Kruse pers. comm.).

Associations:

Eskcok, Glennagadale (1541a) *Eskcog, Glennagadale* (1541b) *Eskcok, Glennagadill (one half), Glennagadill (other half), Kilelane* (1614) *Persabolls, ½ Ariguary, Port Askock, changehouse, ferry, malt-kiln, and changehouse of Balochroy* (1741)

Context:

Eas forsa is about 1.7km to the SSE (see notes on Carnbeg above); and **Cnoc Abhail** a further 800m on the same direction (see notes on Balulive above).

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Robolls (Ballygrant Inn) [ˈrɔːˌb̥ɯsiɡ̊ʲ]

NR 396 667

Robolse (1494) *Robolse* (1542) *Robollis* (1614) *Robols* (1615) *Robols* (1617) *Robos [vel Robollis]* (1627) *Robols* (1631) *Robose* (1662) *Robies* (1665) *Robollis* (1686) *Robols* (1722) *Robolls* (1733) *Robulls* (1741) *Robolls* (1749) *Robolls* (M)

Etymology: ON *rá* (f) + *bólstaðr* (m)

While the generic here is clearly ON *bólstaðr*, the specific element is not as easy to identify. Thomas (MS) favours ON **Rauðrbólstaðr* (*sic.*), 'red farm' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:237); and Maceacharna (1976:86) ON **hraun* + *bólstaðr*, 'rough farm', both of which may or may not have been descriptive of the local

landscape in some way. Gammeltoft (2001:143), on the other hand, suggests **Rábólstaðr*, 'nook or corner farm', which provides a better match for the recorded forms. A further alternative might be ON **Röðbolstaðr* ' farm by the bank, ridge, edge', referring perhaps to the elongated summit of Robolls Hill, which separates the previous Robolls House, now the Ballygrant Inn, from Loch Finlaggan to the NW.

Associations:

Skanlastill, Kynbeloquhane, Capolse, Robolse, Litil Capolse, Kilbranne, Dulloch, Ochtownwruch, Arrevore, Correre, Curloch et Alane Mackindow, in insula de Ila (1494) *Robols et Kepols* (1615) *Robolse et Keplse* (1542)) *Robols et Kepols* (1617) *Keapols Lachlans Cannach Robols* (1631) *Keppullis, Robollis and Ballaclavane* (1686) *Ballechlavan and Robols* (1722) *Balichaven & Robolls* (1733) *Balachlaven and Robulls* (1741)

Context:

Robolls Hill is about half a kilometre to the WNW of the old farm centre.

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Scanistle [ˈsk'ai.ləsd̥ɪɣ] or [ˈsk'ɛlɪstrɪg̊ʲ]

NR 407 676

'Scanlastainnes, with foutie tydie cows and twentie bolls corn and four bolls barley and four plough horses put therein by Sir Alex. Campbell, is designedly by some omitted out of the rental, and therfor I placed it among the rest of the ommissions' (1722)

Skanlastill (1494) *Kaulastoll/ Skaulastoll* (1507) *Scanlastole/ Scanlastole/ Scanlastole* (1509) *Skanlastill/ Skanlastill* (1542) *Scanlascur* (1614) *Skanlastill* (1615) *Skanlastill* (1617) *Scanlastur* (1627) *Skandlastonis* (1631) *Scanlascur* (1662) *Scanlastoll* (1665) *Skandlastounes* (1686) *Scanlastainnes/ Scanlastaines* (1722) *Scanlaston* (1733) *Scanlastone* (1741) *Scanistle* (1749) *Scanlastell* (M)

Etymology: ON *skalli* (m) + *staðir* (m pl)

Although Thomas (MS), Gillies (1906:148) and Maceacharna (1976:86) all see this as an ON *–dalr* (m) or 'valley' name, such an interpretation is not supported by local pronunciation. The terminal [sd̥ɪɣ]/[strɪg̊ʲ] in modern Scanistle is far closer to the endings we find in certain *–bólstaðr* and *–staðir* names than the [d̥ɤɬ] familiar from more certain Islay *–dalr* names. Attention must be drawn in this respect to the series of references to Scanistle covering the period from 1686 to 1741. These show the written ending of the place-name not as *-till, -tell, etc.* but as *-stounes, -stainnes, -staines, -ston, -stone etc.* suggesting that the original generic was ON *staðir* – perhaps with later influence from Scots English *-toon(s).*

When it came to the specific, both Thomas (MS) and Maceàcharna (1976:86) favoured G man's name **Scannlan*, explaining the apparent combination of Norse generic and G personal-name as evidence for Norse-Gaelic or Gall-Gaidheal society. This extended interpretation seems extremely unlikely. If the specific were **Scannlan*, its use in an ON *–bólstaðr* compound need not be indicative of anything other than the borrowing of an Irish personal name into a regional dialect of Norse. On closer scrutiny, however, it does not appear to be supported by the written forms – which lack the necessary /n/ in the second syllable – or local pronunciation – which lacks the necessary /n/ from the first and second syllables. Gillies' (1906:148) suggestion of ON **Skalli* (m) is a much better match for the written and spoken forms. Rather than meaning 'hut' as Gillies suggested, however, (which we would expect from ON *skáli* (m)), this is likely to be the male byname name *Skalli*, meaning 'skull' but by association 'bald' – *cf.* the famous Skallagrímr Kveldulfsson, 'Bald Grim', in *Egils saga Skallagrimsonar* (CVC:536; Pálson & Edwards 1976). NG lists three farm-names believed to derive from ON **Skallastaðir* in Norway, one in Buskeruds amt and two in Jarlsberg og Larviks amt, along with many others which share the same specific element.

Associations:

Skanlastill, Kynbeloquhane, Capolse, Robolse, Litil Capolse, Kilbranne, Dulloch, Ochtownwruch, Arrevore, Correre, Curloch et Alane Mackindow (1494) *Spulse et eujusdam partis de Skaulastoll* (1507) *Polsy et de parte de Scanlastole* (1509) *Polsy et de parte de Scanlastole* (1509) *Killelegane et Skanlastill* (1542) *Killilegan et Skanlastill* (1615) *Skandlastounes, Mullin, Muddaganes, and tua kyne land of Goavallie set with the Laird cattell. Keilchalumkeill and Elay* (1686) *Scanistle & Uchdruiclach (Auchnaclach)* (1749)

Context:

Cnoc Ghuirasdeal lies about 1.4kn to the N (see notes on Stoinsha below).

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Sean Ghairt [ˈʃɛːnə̆ˌɣaɾ̊t]

NR 380 675

Sengart (1507) *Sengart* (1509) *Schangart* (1631) *Shinart* (1654) *Schangart* (1686) *Shengart* (1722) *Shingart* (1733) *Shingart* (1741) *Shangart* (1749) *Sheanyart* (M)

Etymology: G *sean* (adj) + *gart* (m)

Maceacharna's (1976:100) suggestion of G **Seanghart* meaning 'old [in the sense of 'long cultivated'] field' seems plausible. As the land on this farm-district is of relatively high quality, however, one might expect it to have had a slightly more distinctive name. Gillies (1906:214 & 204) suggestion of G **Seana-*

ghart meaning 'old or formerly cultivated garden' would allow for just such a name being lost – perhaps following fiscal or economic re-organisation of the local land-holdings. What it might have been, however, is impossible to say.

Associations:

Sengart et Balhervy (1507) *Sengart et Balloherve* (1509) *Schangart and Leackharlum* (1631) *Schangart and Leakharlum* (1686) *Scarabolls, Shingart, ½ Nether Stensha* (1741)

***

*Stoinsha

Stanchai (1507) *Stanchay* (1509) *Stinchaw* (1541a) *Stinschaw* (1541b) *Scensay* (1562) *Staynsay* (1563) *Staynsay* (1584) *Stinschaw* (1614) *Stenschawe* (1631) *Schinsoll* (1662) *Stinschaw* (1665) *Steshawes* (1686) *Stinschaw* (1627) *Stoainsha* (1749) [see also Stoinsha Eararach, and (Nether) Stoinsha below]

Etymology: ON *Steinn* (m) + *setr* (m)

While Gillies (1906:137 & 148) implies that the element /Staoin/ in this name must derive from the G for 'awry or bent', the presence of what appears to be a medial, genitive /s/ points to Norse original. Maceacharna (1976:86), suggests this might have been ON **Steinsá*, 'the river of the stone' – in reference to a 'big stone' in the nearby river. However, the lenited /s/ at the beginning of the terminal syllable in the local pronunciation does not support an original form ending in a broad vowel (*cf.* Chapter 6). Moreover, there are no farms of this name in Norway, Orkney, Shetland or the Faroes northern isles and only two brooks bearing it in the whole of Norway (NR I:557). Thomas' (MS) derivation from ON **Steinnsetr*, accords better with the local pronunciation – where we might expect the intial lenition and subsequent contraction of ON *–setr* to result in [ʃə]. His translation of the specifc as 'stone', which he links to a 'large white stone beside a rivulet on the farm' is certainly plausible. It is perhaps more likely, however, that the specific here is the male personal name Steinn (NID:956-7). Of the 9 examples of 'Stenset' *etc.* listed in NG[252] and the single 'Stensy' in Orkney (Marwick 1952:28) all 10 are regarded as having a specific derived from the ON personal name Steinn.

Associations:

Ellenynegane, Stinchaw, Balola (1541a) *Ellamyngane, Stinschaw, Ballola* (1541b) *Stenschawe, Loegin & ye liewrheis of Mullin Madegan* (1631) *Stinschaw, Bellolae and Bar* (1665) *Ellenygall, Stinschaw, Balola* (1614) *Steshawes, Easter and Wester* (1686)

Antiquities:

RCAHMS records the remains of a possible **crannog** in **Loch Staoisha** (NMRS:NR47SW 4)

[252] 4 in Buskeruds amt, 2 Nordre Bergenhus amt and 1 each in Akershus, Kristians and Romsdals amt.

Staoisha Eararach

'Stewinsha Upper is a very good possession for stock' (1722)

[ˈstɯːʃə ˌɟɛrɛrɑx] or [ˈstɯːʃə ˌeːrɛrɑx]

NR 399 724

Stewinsha Upper (1722) *Upper Stoinsha* (1733) *Balulve, Nether Stensha ½ , ½ Skerrols and Avenvogie, Upper Stunsha* (1741) *Upper Stoinsha* (M)

Context:

Loch Staoisha lies about 1.1km to the SSE; and **Cnoc Sgarabais** [ˌkrɔːxk ˈska.rəb̥ɯɪʃ] (157m) approx. 700m to the N. Gillies (1906:148) suggests this last name contains G *sgarbh* (m), 'cormorant'. If so, this is unlikely to predate the Viking Age (see notes on *Dudil above but *cf.* also those on Scarrabus in Kilarrow parish). It is perhaps more likely, however, that the onomastic unit *Sgarabais preserves a completely ON *bólstaðr* compound. How, if at all, this was connected with the better documented Scarrrabus in Kilarrow parish is impossible to say.

Abhainn Araig [ˌaviŋ ˈaːrɪg̊] flows past approx 1.25km to the E on its way into Bunnahabhainn Bay. The onomastic unit ***Araig** appears to derive from an earlier Norse **Árvík*, 'Bay of the River', with the effectively tautological addition of G *abhainni,* 'river'. This raises the possibility of G **Bun na h-abhainn*, 'the mouth or the end of the river' (Gillies1906:141) being a direct translation of ON **Árvík.* 'Årvika' *etc.* is a relatively common place-name in Norway applied to coves and farms (see NR I:710; NR II:764; NR III:615).

The summit of **Giùr-bheinn** [ˈɣiɯːrə̆ ˌviŋ] (318m), just under 2km to the WNW, has been interpreted by Maceacharna (1976:118) as a combination of ON 'cleft' and G 'mountain'. Rather than seeing the generic as a G translation of an earlier ON *fjall* (n), 'hill, mountain', it is possible that derivation is from ON *bingr* (m) 'hill, heap' (*cf.* notes on Got-beinn in Kilchoman and Lamh-beinn in Kilarrow).

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(Nether) Staoisha [ˈstɯːʃə]

'Stewinsha Nether good for stock and sowing' (1722)

NR 403 712

Stewinsha Nether (1722) *Nether Stoinsha* (1733) *Balulve, Nether Stensha ½ , ½ Skerrols and Avenvogie, Upper Stunsha* (1741) *Scarabolls, Shingart, ½ Nether Stensha* (1741) *Nather Stoinsha* (M)

Context:

Loch Staoisha lies approx 200m to the E of Staoisha farm buildings; **Abhainn Araig** flows past within 1.5km (see above); and **Cnoc Ghuirasdeal** [ˌkrɔːxk ˈɣɯːrɪsd̥ʎɬ] is about 1.2km to the S. The onomastic unit 'Ghuirasdeal' appears to contain the ON topographic generic *dalr* (m), 'valley', preceded by a medial, ON genetive /s/. Considering the operation of G grammar (Chapter 6), the intial /gh/ in the gaelicised version of this name could conceivably derive from either [g̊] or [d̥], which raises the possibility of an original ON **Dýrsdalr*, 'the valley of the deer'. While there are no exact cognates in Norway,[253] the genitive singular of *dýr*, *dýrs* is found in numerous other topographic and habitative compounds (see NR I:95-6; NR II:98; NR III:87). A further, if somewhat more speculative suggestion is the Norse personal name Guðrøðr or a gaelicised form thereof (see notes on Àiridh Ghutharaidh and Kilmeny above).

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Storakaig [ˈstɔr.axɛg̊ʲ]

NR 405 619

Storegag (1499) *Storragie* (1507) *Storrage* (1509) *Storgag* (1614) *Storgag* (1627) *Storgag* (1631) *Storgag* (1662) *Storgag* (1665) *Storgag* (1686) *Storgaige* (1722) *Storgag* (1733) *Storkaig* (1749) *Storgaig* (M)

Etymology: (ON *stórr* (adj) + *ákr* (m)) + G *aigh* (locative particle)

Thomas suggests G **storrachd* + *aig*, 'a lumpish stoney place'. That the place is now relatively lump and stone free need not be indicative of its condition in times gone by. Given the relatively high quality of the land around Storakaig, it is more tempting to see derivation from ON **Stórákr*, 'big field' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:123; Gillies 1906:148) with the addition of a G locative particle */aidh/ /aigh/ /ach/*

[253] There are, however, numerous examples of Dyrdal (*cf.* NSL:94). Of the six examples of 'Dyrdal(en)' *etc.* listed in NG, Rygh derives four (one in each of Bratsberg, Jarlsberg og Larviks, Nordlands and Nordre Bergenhus amt) from an earlier ON **Dyr[a]dalr*, 'the valley of the deer'. The specific in the remaining two, in Bratsberg and Jarlsberg og Larviks amt, has been explained as a river-name.

etc. (*cf.* Gillies 1906:153; Watson 1904:xxxiv) and/or possible conflation with or part translation by G *achadh* (m), 'field'.

A search for 'stor%' on NG returned 382 hits including a Storakeren in Nordre Bergenhus amt thought to be derived from ON **Stórakr* While there are no exact cognates in Iceland, Jónsson (1907-15:473) notes a Langekra 'long acre' in IV, in Iceland.

Associations:

Bar, Storegag, Aregoware (1499) *Arriduarie and Storgag* (1631) *Cattadale and Storgag* (1665)

Context:

Very few settlements or place-names are shown on this farm-district on OS maps. **Maol a'Bharra** is about 1.7km to the SSE and **Maol a'Chattadail** just over 2 km to the S (see notes on Barr and Cattadale in Kilarrow parish). The closest part of **Gleann Ghàiresdail** [ˌgl̪ɛun ˈɣaːrəsd̪ˠəl̪ˠ] is approx 2.6km to the ESE, with **Allt Gleann Ghàiresdail** flowing through it from the W before meeting the Sound of Islay at **Lùb Gleann Ghàiresdail** *c.* 3.5km to the E. The onomastic unit *Ghàiresdail appears to preserve an earlier ON *–dalr* name. What the specific might have been, however, is difficult to say (*cf.* discussion of Cnoc Ghuirasdeal under Nether Staoisha above).

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Tiervaagain [ˌtʃiːr ˈvɛʔi.ɣəŋ]

NR 381 647

Tyrvagan (1631) *Thirmagan* (1662) *Teirmagane* (1686) *Turmagan* (1722) *Tirvaigain* (1749) *Teenvagin* (M)

Etymology: G *tìr* (m) + *Mathagan* (m)

While Maceacharna (1976:123) suggests a pressumably figurative G **Tir Mhathagan*, 'the land of the bears', Gillies Cameron (1906:149) suggests the specific is more likely to be a personal name; and Thomas that the personal name in question is Mathagan, a diminutive of Matha, Matthew. This latter explanation is possibly the easiest to accept.

Associations:

Losset, Gertontibbert, Gortenles, Kilsleaveens, Balluchturk, Balleclach, Kilmenie and Turmagan (1722)

Context:

Loch Bharradail and **Allt Loch Bharradail** are about 1.5km to the SE and **Beinn Bharra-dail** is approx 1.75km to the SSE (see notes on Dail in Killarrow parish). The river **Sorn** flows past approx. 1.15km to the WNW. **Dùn Ghùaidhre** lies approx. 750m to the E (see notes on Kilmeny above).

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Torrabus [ˈtoːrəˌb̥ʌs]

NR 422 703

Teirobollis (1507) *Torobollis* (1509) *Terebols* (1631) *Torobollis* (1686) *Torobols* (1722) *Torobolls* (1733) *Torobolls* (1741) *Torrabolls* (1749) *Torabus* (M)

Etymology: ON ?*Þorir* (m) + *bólstaðr* (m)

While the generic here is clearly ON *-bólstaðr*, the specific has thusfar elluded satisfactory explanation. The ON *torfa* (f), 'turf, a green spot' and ON *torg* (n), a 'square, a market-place', suggested by Maceachearna (1976:86) and Gillies (1906:241) have recently been criticised by Gammeltoft (2001:155-6). His main objection to both is the presence of an /n/ at the end of the first syllable in what he describes as 'the earliest piece of documentation' for the name. Somewhat confusingly, however, this cited documentation refers to a completely different location. While the now lost 'Thornobeslay' in Kildalton might well, as Gammeltoft suggests, be derived from ON **Þornabólstaðr*, 'thorn-bush farm', it is unlikely that the same can be said of Torrabus in Kilmeny parish. For one thing, there is no /n/ or [n] in any recorded form of the name. Despite Gammeltoft's reservations, the only problematic record is that in the RMS trancript of the MacIan's 'extent' of 1507. But as this varies so radically from all other recorded forms, including the local pronunciation, it can probably be explained as a scribal error – /e/ and /i/ are often easily mistakeable for /o/ and /r/ in the documents of this period. Secondly and perhaps more importantly, the local pronunciation of Torrabus has a long [o:] in the first syllable, which is not consisitent with the short vowel-sound we might expect from ON *þorn.*

Taken together, if the written forms, local pronunciation and name-typological norms do not derive from ON *torfa*, they are most likely to point to a personal name – perhaps ON *Þóra* (f) (NID:1134-5) or *Þorir* (m) (NID:1180-2) which both have long vowel sounds in the first syllable. While there are no exact cognates for either **Þórubólstaðr* or **Þorisbólstaðr* in Norway, NG and NR list numerous farms where the specific, 'Tore', and is thought to be derived from the man's name Þorir.

Associations:

Videlicet Teirobollis (1507) *Terebols and Persebols* (1631) *Torobollis and Persobollis* (1686)

Context:

Port Borrachaig (see notes on Ardnahoe above) lies about 900m to the NE, the summit of **Cnoc Abhail** (see notes on Balulive) about 750m to the SSW and that of **Beinn Dubh a Mhargaidh** about 1km to the SSE (see notes on Port Askaig above).

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4: KILDALTON

Ardbeg [ˌaɾtʃ ˈvihkʲ]

NR 415 463

Ardbeg (1749) *Ardbeg* (M)

Etymology: G *àird* (f) + *beag* (adj)

G **Àird bheag*, 'little headland' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Maceachana 1976:114). Although this name is not well attested and has clearly only risen to the status of farm-district since the demise of the previous local 'centre' of Largybrek in the early 18th century (see below), it is nevertheless likely to predate the earliest reference by quite some time – as the name of either a topographical feature, a subordinate settlement or both. Given the clearly appellative nature of this name, however, and the frequency with which Kildalton settlement-names beginning *àird-* appear to be built on pre-existing Nores name material, it must be wondered whether Ardbeg is not in fact a direct translation of Norse forebear – perhaps along the lines of **Litlanes*.

A search for 'lille%' on NG returned 252 hits – including 3 examples of Lilleneset in Romsdals amt; a Lillenes in Sømdre Trondhjems amt; and a Lillenes Ytre in Trømso amt. Several dozen further examples of 'Litlanes' *etc.* including farm- and nature-names are listed in NR (I:356; II:375; III:294); with another three examples noted by Jónsson (1907-15:491) in Iceland.

Context:

Ardbeg Burn forms a pool beside the current farm buildings before draining into the sea several hundred metres to the South. The hill-top of **Tundal**, listed in the 1878 OS Name-book, is within a kilometre to the NE (see notes on Airigh nam Beist below); and **Eilean Imersay** about 1.1km to the ESE (see notes on Ardimersay below).

***Largybrecht** [No phonetics]

(NR 41 46?)

Larg (1507) *Larg* (1509) *Dunoyik, Killcallumkill and Largebrak, Iletor, Drumcurrane* (1541a) *Ardrudanis, Dunoyik, Kilcallumkill and Largbrak, Iletor, Drumcurran* (1541b) *Heyrne et Largebrak* (1542) *Heryne et Largebrak* (1545) *Leargbreaik* (1631) *the other half of Ardtalloch, Arbrodneis, Donozick, Kilcalumkill and Largobronk* (1665) *Lergiebreck* (1686) *4' of Largy* (1733) *2' of Largybrecht* (1733) *2' of Largybrecht* (1733) *½ of Largybrecht* (1733)

Etymology: G *learg* (f) + *breac* (adj), 'the speckled slope'.

Context:

The demise of the once substantial holding of 'Larg(ybrecht)'[254] is no doubt linked to the fate of the adjacent farm-district and previous MacDonald centre of Dunyvaig in the late 17th and early 18th centuries (*cf.* notes on Lagavulin below; See also Chapter 7).

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Ardilistry [ˌaɾ ˈd̥ʒeiːˌlɪstri]

NR 441 490

Ardelistie (1631) *Ileton* (1662) *Iletrun* (1665) *Ardelistie* (1686) *Ardelistie* (1722) *Ardelister* (1733) *Ardelester* (1741) *Ard-Ellistry* (1749) *Ardelistor* (M)

Etymology: G *àird* (f) + (ON *?hella* (f) + *staðir* (m pl))

G *Àird*, 'point, headland', attached to a pre-existing ON *Ilistry. If the generic here were been ON *–setr* as both Thomas (MS) and Gillies (1906:155 & 151) suggest, we might have expected the grouping of /s/ and 'slender' vowel(s) to result in a lenited [ʃ] in the G pronunciation (*cf.* Chapter 6). When this absence of lenition is taken alongside the early written forms, it seems more likely that the generic was ON *staðir*. The 1662 and 1665 forms in particular, with their terminal /n/, appear to preserve a vestige of the dat. pl. *-stödum* or its definite form *-stöðunum*, perhaps through adaptation into Scots English *-to(o)n*.

Given the quality of the initial vowel, it seems unlikely that the specific in *Ilistry is an exact cognate of that in *Ellister (*cf.* Thomas MS; Gillies 1906:155 & 151). Better matches are provided by ON *hellir* (m) 'cave' and ON *hella* (f) 'flat rock' (see notes on *Ellister in Kilchoman). Considering the absence of conspicuous caves in the vicinity of *Ilistry, however, and the presence of a 200m stretch of large rocks between the two sandy beaches on the NE shore of Ardilistry bay, it is perhaps most likely that derivation is from ON **Hellastaðir*, 'the farm of/by the flat rocks'.

Associations:

Knockrinsay, Ardelistie, Arigearie (1631) *Knokryndsay, Ardelistie, and Arrizearne* (1686) *Knockrinsey and Ardelistie* (1722) *Knock and Ardelister* (1733) *Knock & Ardelester* (1741) *Ard-Ellistry & Islands* (1749)

Antiquities:

Dùn Ardilidtry is about 1km to the SSE (NMRS:NR44NW 9); **Dun Druim Am-Ir-Ach** 1.15km to the N (NMRS:NR45SW 7); and the **fort** of **Dun Beag** about 2km to the NNW (NMRS:NR45SW 6).

[254] In 1507, for example, the holding of Larg extended to £13 6s. 8d – *ie.* four times the extent of the standard large holding in Islay – the quarterland of 33s. 4d. The significance of land and territorial divisions are discussed at length in chapter 8.

The RCAMS Inventory lists the remains of a suspected **chapel**, measuring *c.* 7.5m E-W by 5m over walls *c.* 1m thick, some 850m to the SE of the farm buildings at Ardilistry. There are no traces of a burial ground (NMRS:NR44NW 1).

Context:

Ardilistry River flows past the farm buildings to the W. **Ardilistry Bay**, about 400m to the SW offers good shelter, anchorage and beaching.

Rubha Thòrrnish [ˌruː.ə. ˈhɔːrə̆ˌniʃ] lies approx. 700m to the SSW. The name of this headland shows the effectively tautological addition of G *rubha* (m), 'promontory', to the pre-existing ON *-nes* compound *Torrnish. As with Thòrr-innis in Smaull (Kilchoman), however, the specific element in this compound is by no means easy to identify. The ON male personal names *Þór* and *þórrir* are both possible (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:75). NG also lists 4 farms with the name Tornes in Norway – 2 in Romsdals amt and 1 each in Stavanger and Søndre Bergenhus amt – where interpretation of the specific ranges from the personal names Torfi, Þóra, Þórunn, through the river-name Tora, 'the thundering one' (*cf.* NSL:317), to *þorfa* meaning 'greensward, turf' and *þorn* meaning 'thorn'. While derivation from a river-name can possibly be discounted in the case of the river free *Tòrrnish in Kildalton, the others are all plausible.

Just inland from this promontary is **Bruthach Sheònish**, known in English as 'Janet's Brae' (D. Campbell, pers. comm.). It is possible, however, that the accosiation of this hillside with an eponymous Janet is the result of folk etymology. As (Maceacharna 1976:75) points out, the onomastic unit *Sheònish is perhaps more likely to derive from ON **Sjónes*, 'sea point'. NR lists 3 examples of Sjøneset in central Norway (NR II:544) and 2 more in the northern part of the country (NR III:444).

Cnoc Rhaonastil lies about 700m to the SW (see below), **Loch Carn a'Mhaoil** *etc. c.* 1.5km to the NNW (see notes on Creagfinn below); and **Loch Tallant** *c.* 1.5km to the NNE (see notes on Kildalton below).

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Ardenistle [ˌaɾ ˈd̪ʒeːnɪsˌd̪ˠəɬ] or [ˌaɾ ˈd̪ʒiːnɪsˌd̪ˠəɬ]

NR 391 450

'Arinisdill, Bar, Surnaig, and Craegnagoir being alike good both for the incress of sowing and cattle both for milk and gendering of cattle, as good as any so much in the countrie, lying upon the shore side' (1722)

Ardinstill (1631) *Ardinastill* (1686) *Ardinistill* (1722) *Arinisdill* (1722) *Ardinistell* (1733) *Ardinistill* (1741) *Ardinastle* (1749) *Ardeeneslell* (M)

Etymology: G *àird* (f) + *an* (art) (ON *askr* (m) + *dalr* (m))

Gillies (1906:154) sees this name as G **Àird an uisge*, 'the water height', citing the idiosyncratic tendency of /g/ to become /c/ or /t/ in Scottish Gaelic. As there are no significant patches of ground water, lochs or even streams in the vicinity of the modern farm-centre, however, this seems improbable. Perhaps a more likely explanation is that the name represents a formally secondary Gaelic construction along the lines of *Àird an* *Istel, with the final onomastic unit representing ON **Askdalr*, 'ash-tree valley' or ON **Eskidalr*, 'valley with the clump of ash-trees'. While there are no longer belived to be any native ash-trees in the vicinity, stands of other trees from this family, such as the rowan, are relatively common in this part of Kildalto – raising the possiblilty that ash-tress were also found here in the past (*cf.* Port Askaig above, and Chapter 1).

ON *askr* (m), is thought to be the first element in many Norwegian farm-names (NSL:60), with NG recording 4 examples of 'Askdal/ Eskedal' *etc.* in each of Jarlsberg og Larviks amt with a further 2 in Nedenes and 1 in in Søndre Bergenhus amt. In addition to this, NR lists about a dozen further examples, predominantly in the southern part of the country (NR I:7, 112; NR II: 8; NR III: 10). Not suprisingly, the sparse vegetation of the Northern Isles and the Faroes' northern isles has not given rise to cognates.

Associations:

Surnaig, Drumhunst, Bar, and Craegnagouer; Ardinistill (1722) *Ardinistill, Torodell, ½ Tyndrom* (1741)

Antiquities:

The 'ancient **burial ground**' of **Cill Luchaig** lies about 300m to the NNW (RCAHMS 1984:166).

Context:

Meall Shurnaig lies approx 900m to the ENE (see notes on Surnaig below) and the isle of **Texa** *c.* 1.1km to the S (see below).

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Ardimersay [ˌar ˈd̥ʒiːˌmərsei]

'Arimissey, Arinabies and Solam being a tolerable possession for stock' (1722)

NR 437 475

[*Ellan Imersga* (1549)] *Ardmiersay* (1631) *Ardunersay* (1686) *Ardimissey* (1722) *Ardimissy* (1733) *Ardimissy* (1741) *Ardimarsay & Islands* (1749) *Ardimersay* (M)

Etymology: G *àird* (f) + (ON *himbrin* (n) OR *ím* (n) + *sker* (f))

G *Àird*, 'headland', prefixed to Norse *Imersay. Given that the adjacent island is now known as **Eilean Imersay**, it is generally assumed that the generic here is ON *ey* (f), 'island'. With the generic element in the earliest recorded form of this island-name containing a /g/, however, it is perhaps more likely that the derivation is from ON *sker* (n), 'skerry'.

Previous derivations of the specific are also open to question. Gillies (1906:155), for example, saw this as 'Ymir', the name of the mythical giant, giving a phonemically acceptable **Ymirsey*. Name typologically, however, this construct is almost completely without parallel. While there is a reference to a fictional Ymisland in *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks* (Tunstall 2005: Chp.6), the name Ymir is unknown in real place-names (Lind:1116).

Thomas' (MS) suggestion of ON **Himbrimisey* (*sic.*), 'the island of the Great Northern Diver' (*Gavia immer*) seems more reasonable. As these birds are still a common sight in the sea-bays around Kildalton (Ogilvie 2003:29), *Imersay can be compared with the 'Imber-skerri' in Shetland, which Jakobsen (1936:146) interprets as 'the skerry of the Great Northern Diver'. Perhaps a better explanation in terms of both phonemics and physical environment, however, would be to see the name as ON **Ímsker* 'sea-spray skerr(y/ies)'. NSL (p.171), lists an Imsa in Lindesnes hd, Vest Agder, where the specific is interpreted as ON *ím* (n) meaning 'dust or (sea)spray' (NSL:171). This agrees with the conditions at Ardimersay now as it would no doubt also have done 1000+ years ago – where the rocks and skerries around Eilean Imersay can produce a lot of spray.

Associations:

Ellan Imersga (1549) *Ardimissey & Arinabeise* (1722) *Ardimissy, Ardnabist* (1733) *Ardimarsay & Islands* (1749)

Antiquities:

The suspected **crannog** in Loch nan Diol (NR44NW 38) is just over a kilometre to the NNW. The **fort** of **Fang a'Chaiteil** lies *c.* 900m to the SW (NMRS:NR4SW 21) and **An Dùn** near Kildalton House (NMRS:NR44NW 17) 400m to the NNE.

Context:

Eilean Imersay [ˌeː.la.n ˈiːˌmərsei] is approx. 1km to the SW; **Cnoc Rhaonastill** about 1.25km to the N (see below); and **Rhubha Thòrrnish/Ardilistry Bay** 1km to the NNE (see notes on Ardilistry above).

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Ardmeinach [ˌaɾd ˈmiːnax] or [ˌaɾd ˈmeː.nax]

NR 465 510

'Ardmeanich is a good little possession, enclosed almost by the sea. Good for sowing and stock; and a sheltering in the muire' (1722)

Ardmanach (1541a) *Ardmanach* (1541b) *Ardmanoch* (1545) *Ardmannoch* (1558) *Ardmannoch* (1614) *Ardmannoch* (1627) *Ardmonnach* (1662) *Ardmenach* (1686) *Armeanich* (1722) *Ardmainoch* (1733) *Ardmenisn* (1741) *Ardmanach* (1749) *Ardmenoch* (M)

Etymology: G *àird* (f) + *meadhon(ach)* (adj)

Maceacharna's (1976:113) suggestion of G **Àird Mheadhonach*, 'the mid height or promontory', seems like a reasonable interpretation of the recorded forms of this nature-cum-farm-name and its location mid-way between the headlands of Trudernish and Ardmore. It could be argued, however, albeit tentatively, that the acknowledged Gaelic forms fo this name are an adaptation of an earlier ON **Miðnes* or **Meðalnes*, 'the middle promontory'.

NG lists a Menes in Nordre Bergenhus amt where the specific is thought to derive from ON *meðal*, 'medial',[255] with NR (II:404; III:320; see also NSL:218) showing several others in the central and northern part of the contry. In addition to this, Jónsson (1907-15:491) notes a Meðalnes (XX) and a Miðjanes (XII) in Iceland; and Marwick (1952:56) a Meaness, in Sanday, Orkney.

Associations:

Ardmanoch et Hardmoir (1545) *Ardmannoch et Ardmoir* (1558) *Ardmoir, Ardmenisn, Kildaltan* (1741)

Antiquities:

An Dùn at **Mullach Bàn** (Fort of the fair summit (Maceacharna 1976:37)) lies approx 450m to the SW (NMRS:NR45SE 13)

Context:

The name **Glas Uig** [ˌg̊laːs ˈɯːiɡ̊ʲ], which denotes a horse-shoe shaped bay about 600m to the NE of Ardmeinach, is worthy of note here. Although both elements in this name could be G – meaning

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'grey/green' and 'bay' respectively[256] – their specific-generic order is unusual for a G place-name (*cf.* Chapter 6). It is perhaps more likely, therefore, as Maceacharna (1976:74) suggests, that the name is derived from ON **Glæsvíkr*, 'glaring (=sea) bay'. The element **glas* used in this way, is not unkown in Norwegian place-names (NSL:129; see also notes on Glassans in Kilchoman).

Aros Bay/ Tràigh Aros are *c.* 700m to the N (see notes on Trudernish below).

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Ardmore [ˌaːɽd ˈmoːr]

NR 465 505

'Ardmore and Kildalan is a very good possession for sowing and pasturage and increase of cattle, and has both shore and muire and three islands belonging to it' (1722)

Ardmoir (1541a) *Ardmoir* (1541b) *Hardmoir* (1545) *Ardmoir* (1558) *Ardmoir* (1614) *Ardmoir* (1627) *Ardmoir* (1654) *Ardmoir* (1662) *Ardmore* (1665) *Ardmoir* (1686) *Ardmore* (1722) *Ardmore* (1733) *Ardmoir* (1741) *Ardmore* (1749) *Ardmore* (M)

Etymology: G *àird* (f) + *mór* (adj)

G **Àird Mhór*, 'the great headland' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:114). As with Ardbeg above, however, the clearly appellative nature of this name raises the possibility that Ardmore is in fact a direct translation of a lexically transparant Norse forebear, in this case something along the lines of ON **Stórnes*, 'the great headland'. NG lists 6 examples of 'Stornes(et)' in Norway – 4 in Tromsø amt and 1 each in Nordre Trodhjems and Nedenes amt – with several dozen others recorded in NR (NR I:572; NR II:623; NR III:506).

Associations:

Ardmanoch et Hardmoir (1545) *Ardmannoch et Ardmoir* (1558) *Ardmore and Glagginnoch* (1665) *Ardmoir, Ardmenisn, Kildaltan* (1741) *Ardmore & Islands* (1749)

Antiquities:

An Dùn at Ardmore is approx 450m to the SW (NMRS:NR45SE 15).

Context:

Aros Bay/ Tràigh Aros are *c.* 1.2km to the N (see notes on Trudernish below) and **Clas Uig** *c.* 900m to the NE (see notes on Ardmeinach above).

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[256] G *uig*, when used in this sense, must be seen as a borrowing from ON *vík* (f) 'bay' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:241).

Ardtalla [ˌaɾ̪ ˈtʃɑɬa]

'Ardtello is very good for pasturage and fattning and for grain' (1722)

NR 466 545

Ardtalloch (1541a) *Ardtalloch* (1541b) *Ardhallowane* (1545) *Ardalowane* (1558) *Ardtalloch* (1614) *Ardtalloch* (1627) *Ard hallom* (1654) *Ardtalloch* (1662) *Ardtalloch* (1665) *Ardtallo* (1686) *Ardtello* (1722) *Ardtalla* (1733) *Ardtalla* (1741) *Ardtallay* (1749) *Artala* (M)

Etymology: G *àird* (f) + (ON *hár* (adj) + *land* (n))

While Maceacharna (1976:114) suggests G **Àrd Talla*, 'Rock height', Thomas (MS) favours G **Àird Thalmhuinn*, 'the height of the good or true soil'. Neither are particularly convincing. Given the idiomatic nature of Maceacarna's suggestion and the unsupported and unparalleled nature of Thomas', it is perhaps more likely that the name derives from the effectively tautological addition of G *àird* to an earlier ON *Talla compound. As the current farm centre is 'elevated and surrounded by moor' (Thomas MS) deribvation is most probably from ON **Há(va)land*, 'high farm' – with the initial /t/ resulting from the operation of the G grammar system (Chapter 6). Although the current farm centre, at between 10 and 20m OD, is not particularly 'high' in an Islay context, it may be significant that the farm-distict of Artalla as shown on MacDougall's map appears to include the peak of Beinn Bheigier (491m) – the highest point on the island.

NG lists 9 examples of 'Haaland' *etc.* – 5 in Stavanger amt and 2 each in Nordre Bergenhus amt and Lister og Mandals amt – all of which are thought to be derived from ON **Há(va)land.* According to NSL (p.169), the modern reflex of this name, 'Håland', is a very common farm name in Norway between Agder and Sunnfjord – as is 'Holand' (from *hór, høg*) from Møre northwards (NSL:157).

Of the 12 examples of 'Holland', listed by Marwick (1952:2, 10, 24, 46, 49, 52, 55, 78, 88, 98, 115, 171), 5 are applied to the largest or best farms in their respective islands or localities – mirroring the historical and modern situation of Ardtalla in Kildalton.

Associations:

alterius partis sue dimidietatis de Ardtalloch (1662) *the other half of Ardtalloch, Ardbrodneis, Donozick, Kilcalumkill and Largobronk* (1665) *Ardtalla, Surnaig Barr and Cragnagore* (1741)

Antiquities:

The **fort** of **Dùn Nan Gall** 'Fort of the strangers' (NMRS:NR45NE 1) is approx. 1.5km to the N; and the **dun** of **Dùn An Rubha Bhuidhe** 'Fort of the yellow promontary' (NMRS:NR45SE 6) *c.* 450m to the S.

The site of the old burial ground of **Borra Chille** lies approx. 380m to the NNE of the farm house (RCAHMS 1984:158; NMRS:NR45SE 17).

Context:

Cnoc Rhaonadail lies about 1.2km to the SSW (see notes on Claggain below). The sandy beach at **Bàgh a'Bhorra-chille** and off-lying skerry of **Creag a'Bhorra-chille** lie about 400m to the NE of Ardtalla. Although the proximity of these topographical features to the burial ground of Borra Chille might suggest that the onomastic unit *Bhorra-chille is a compound of G *bàrr* (m), '(hill) top' and *cill* (f) 'chapel, burial ground', there are reasons to suspect that it is in fact Norse in origin.

The onomastic unit *Bhorra-chille is also found in two other areas in Islay – Borraichill Mór (156m) *etc.* to the E of Port Ellen and Borichill Mór (91m) *etc.* between Carrabus and Coullabus in Kilarrow. Maceacharna (1976:37-8) explains these names as ancient compounds containing 'the Old Celtic adjective uchell (uxellos = high) used as a noun with an intensive prefix *cf.* Ochil Hills'. Given the known survival of Norse names in the surounding area, however, this particular etymological net seems unnecessarily wide. While neither the *Borraichill near Port Ellen or that near Kilarrow are associated with ecclesicatical structures, both share their name with the Iron Age fortification(s) which dominate their summits (see notes on Carrabus in Killarrow parish and Tighandrom below). As a result, common derivation from ON **Borga(r)fjall*, 'hill of the fort' seems more likely. NR (I: 46; NR II:48; III:40) lists several examples of 'Borgfjell(et) *etc.* in Norway.

In the case of the Ardtalla *Bhorra-chille:s the hill in question appears to have been Maol Ardtalla (80m), *c.* 500m to the NE, which also overlooks the fort of Dùn Nạn Gall (see above). With this name being secondary to the gaelicised form of ON **Hávaland* it could quite conceivably stand in place of an earlier ON **Borga(r)fjall.*

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Airigh nam Beist [ˌaːri nəm ˈb̥iːˌast]

NR 416 475

Ardnabeast (1686) *Arinabeise* (1722) *Ardnabist* (1733) *Ardnebeist* (1741) *Arinambiast* (1749) *Arinobiast* (M)

Etymology: G *àirigh* (f) + *nam* (art) + *biast* (f)

Gillies (1906:123) explains this name as a cognate of Airinabost in Mull, which he interprets as G *àirigh an* + ON *hár* + *bost* [=*bólstaðr*]. Given that the early forms of Islay's *-bólstaðr* names never contain an /e/ or an /i/ in the first syllable, however, it seems unlikely that Airigh nam Beist belongs to this group.

Maceacharna's (1976:113) derivation of G **Àirigh nam Biast*, 'animal sheiling', sits better with the early forms of the name, its local pronunciation and somewhat marginal topographical situation.

Associations:

Drumchurran and Ardnabeast (1686) *Ardimissey & Arinabeise* (1722) *Ardimissy, Ardnabist* (1733)

Context:

The wooded hill-top of **Tùndal** ['tu:n̩d̥ăɬ] lies approx. 750m to the ESE. While this could potentially be seen as ON **Hundadalr*, 'Hundi's valley', the absence of a medial genitive morpheme makes a derivation from ON **Hunddalr*, 'dog dale', perhaps equally likely. Nature names containing the animal name 'hund' are relatively common in Norway, where they are thought to indicate either the presence of wild dogs or, particularly in the case of islets and skerries, danger (NSL:164; See notes on *Ellister in Kilchoman parish for further discussion).

Cnoc Crun na Maoll approx. 1km to the NNW (see notes on Creagfinn below) and **Eilean Imersay** about 500m to the SSE (see notes on Ardimersay above).

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Arivoichallum [ˌari ˈʊəi.xa.ɬʌm] or [ˌa.ri ɯəi ˈxa.ɬʌm]

NR 349 499

Arvolhalm (1733) *Arivolhalm* (1741) *Aryvoachallum* (1749) *Aryolcalum* (M)

Etymology: G *àirigh* (f) + *Maolchaluim* (m)

G **Airidh Mhaolchaluim*, 'Malcolm's sheiling' (*cf.* Thomas MS).

Associations:

Balyneil and Arvolhalm (1733) *Proaig, Balineil, Arivolhalm* (1741) *Aryvoachallum* (1749)

Context:

Abhainn Airigh Bhaile Chaluim flows past the site to the N; **Conas-airigh** lies *c.* 1.5km to the ESE (see notes on Upper Leorin below); **Loch na Maolaig** [ˌlɔ:x nəˈmø:lɪg̊ʲ] is about 1.15km to the W. While the linguistic matrix of this last name is clearly G, giving a meaning of 'the loch of *Maolaig', it is possible that the final onomastic unit reflects an earlier ON **Mölvík*, 'shingle bay'. This can be compared with the 2 Norwegian examples of 'Mølvik' listed in NR (NR I:402; NR III: 338). If so, it is likely that this described the (southern part of) Laggan Bay. Although the beach at Tràigh a'Mhachaire to the W of

Arivoichallum is famously sandy, there are numerous places on its landward side where the sand gives way to gravelly deposits.

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Asabus [ˈasəˌb̥ɯs]

NR 303 426

Assibolls (1741) *Assabus* (1749) *Assibus* (M)

Etymology: ON *áss* (m) + *bólstaðr* (m)

The generic here is ON *bólstað*, 'farm, steading'. Gammeltoft's (2001:101) suggestion that the specific is ON *áss*, 'ridge', appears to be borne out by the nearby ridge of Cnoc Seunta. He explains the terminal vowel in this element as the remnant of a masuline genitive singular, u-stem inflection – *ie.* a genitive /a/ – or a svarbhakti vowel introduced to aid in the pronunciation of a difficult consonantal cluster genetive plural (*cf.* Chapter 6).

Context:

Port Asabuis lies about 2km to the SE, with **Casaberry** [ˈkʰasəˌb̥ɛri] and **Lòn Casaberry** [ˌlɔːn ˈkʰasəˌb̥ɛri] approx. 1.25km to the ENE. Despite the initial [kʰ] sound in the last two names, it is possible that irregular development – perhaps through the augmentation of an initial glottal catch on adaptation into Gaelic – masks the development of the specific from the ON *áss* (m), 'ridge' of Asabus.

The generic in *Casaberry is ON *berg* (n), in the sense of 'mountain or lump of rock'.[257] The mountain name Åsberg(et) *etc.* is not uncommon in Norway (see, *eg.* NRII:764). While the Islay Casaberry names are no longer asociated with a mountain, this can probably be equated with the rocky outcrop of Maol bheag (169m), some 1.5km to the ESE of Asabus and immediately to the S of Casaberry and Lòn Casaberry.

It is worth noting that Port Asabuis is only 600m to the ENE of Stremnishmore. While it would be unlikely that the barely attested Asabus, was once the umbrella term for the well-documented district of Stremishmore,[258] this does suggest that the bay was previously controlled by or more frequently used by the inhabitants of Asabus. This may have had something to do with the relative land-qualities of the two districts. While the lands of Stremnishmore are windswept and agriculturally uninspiring even by Islay standards, those of Asabus are situated on a fertile bed of limestone derived soil. If, as seemed likely, this

[257] See Cox 1998:59-65 for a discussion of the development of ON *berg* in the [Outer] Hebrides.
[258] On the contrary, the absence of Asabus from the early sources suggests that it was originally part of the farm-district of Stremnishmore.

district produced an arable surplus, it may well have been shipped elsewhere to market via the natural harbour at Port Asabuis.

The relatively high quality of land around Asabus would also explain the name of the cultivated slope of **Cnoc na Corra Mhaoil** [ˌkrɔ:xk nə ˌkɔraˈvø:l], which extends from the current Asabus farm-buildings to the border with Kinnabus several hundred metres to the W. While the construct is G, the onomastic unit *Corra Mhaoil appears to derive from an earlier ON **kornavöllr*, 'corn field'. This is paralleled by the Kornfjellet listed by NR in central Norway (NR II:314; see also notes on Cornabus below).

The farm-stead of **Risabus** lies c.1.35km to the NE (see notes on Ballychatrican below).

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Ballivicar [ˌb̥alɪ ˈviu:x.kər]

'Ballevicar a very good pennie worth of land, alike good for sowing and pasturage as any in the parish, and a good soil for sheep' (1722)

NR 343 468

Baile bhicare (1408) *Baldvicar* (1614) *Baldviccar [vel Balviccar]* (1627) *Ballevickar* (1631) *Balyvicar* (1654) *Beldeviccar* (1662) *Delbeviccar* (1665) *Ballaviccar* (1686) *Ballevicar* (1722) *Balyvicar* (1733) *Balivicar* (1741) *Balivicar* (1749) *Ballyvikar* (M)

Etymology: G *baile (m)* + *bhiocair* (m)

The standard etymology for this name is G **Baile a'Bhiocair*, 'the townland of the vicar' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Macheacharna 1976:114). Given that the earliest reference to the farm-district is as one of the lands granted by Donald Lord of the Isles to Brian 'Vicar' MacKay in the Gaelic Charter of 1408 (BI:16-18), it is conceivable that MacKay was in fact the eponymous vicar and that the name dates only to the late 14th or early 15th century. What it may have replaced is difficult to say. Given the large number of ON -*bólstaðr* names in the surrounding area, however, it is not impossible that it would also have been Norse.

Associations:

Baile bhicare, [M]ac[aire Learga]riabhoige, Ciontragha, Grastol,Tocamol, W[g]asgog, D[a ghleann a]stol, Cracobus, Cornubus, Baile Neaghton (1408) *Kilnawchtoune, Baldferssoune, Baldvicar* (1614) *Kilnauchtoun, Baldferssoun [vel Balfersson] et Baldviccar [vel Balviccar]* (1627) *Kilnauchtan, Beldesertoun et Beldeviccar* (1662) *Kilnauchtoun, Beildfersone and Delbeviccar* (1665) *Ballaviccar, Illatour, and Ballafersoun, and Branabollis* (1686) *½ Tycarmagan, ½ Tycarmagan, Upper and Nether Leurin, ½ Tyndrom, Balivicar* (1741)

Context:

Imeraval and **Port Imeraval**, are about 1.5km to the SE (*cf.* notes on Ballichatrigan below); **Cornabus** and the **Cornabus Burn** *c.* 600m and 900m to the WSW (see notes on Kilnaughton below); and **Cnocan Bhrannabuis** [ˌkrɔx:kə̆n ˈvra:nˌəb̥ɯs] approx. 700m to the NW. Although this last name is now attached to a topographical feature, it is likely that the onomastic unit *Bhrannabuis[259] derives from an earlier ON *–bólstaðr* construct. Maceacharna's (1976:85) interpretation of 'Brian's farm' raises a number of intriguing questions – of whether the Brian in question was Brian Vicar MacKay (see above) and whether this means that some form of Norse speech was still being used as the local vernacular in the late 14th century. All things considered, however, it seems more likely, as Gammeltoft (2001:101) suggests, that the specific here comes from the ON verb *brenna*, 'to burn' and refers to land management techniques. A search for 'brenn%' on NG returned 186 hits. In the majority of case this was though to reflect an earlier ON *brenna* (f) 'land cleared by burning'.

Loch Muchairt [ˌlɔ:x ˈmu:xəɽtʃ], possibly containing ON *fjördr* is *c.* 1.4km to the WNW; and **Druim an Stuin** [ˌdri:m ən ˈstuːĭñ] (42m), G 'ridge of the *Stuin (ON *stein* (m), 'stone')' (Maceacharna 1976:88; but see also notes on Stuine below) *c.* 1.75km to the WNW.

Maceacharna (1976:85) lists an otherwise unrecorded **Tosabus**, which he places in the vicinity of Ballivicar and explains as an unlikely ON **Húsabólstaðr*, 'the farm of the houses'. As Gammeltoft (2001:86 FN 86) points out, however, this name can probably be equated with the now lost Tornabus recorded in the charters of 1562, 1563 and 1584 and as such is more likely to derive from ON **Þornabólstaðr*, 'thorney farm' (*cf.* notes on Ardilistry above).

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Ballychatrigan [ˌb̥ɑła ˈxa:trikə̆n]

'Ballechattrikins amongs the foremost quarter lands in the whole island, if not the very best' (1722)

NR 323 419

Ballyquhatrikkyn (1541a) *Ballyquhatrikkyn* (1541b) *Balliekatalzin* (1562) *Balchattregin* (1563) *Ballechattregin* (1584) *Ballequhattrikyne* (1614) *Ballequhatrivkin* (1627) *Ballechattrikin* (1631) *Balechatehinnish* (1654) *Belliequhitviken* (1662) *Belliqhumtribine* (1665) *Ballachattrechin* (1686) *Ballechattrakeins* (1722) *Ballechattrikins* (1722) *Ballychatrigan* (1733) *Balichristan* (1741) *Balichatrigan* (1749) *Ballyhatricun* (M)

Etymology: *G baile (m)* + **Catrigan* (m)

[259] *Branabols* (1541a) *Branabols* (1541b) *Branabols* (1614) *Barnabus [vel Branabols]* (1627) *Ballaviccar, Illatour, and Ballafersoun, and Branabollis* (1686)

Although the simplest explanation of this name would be G **Baile Chatrigan*, 'Chatrigan's steading' (*cf.* Thomas MS), it has been argued by Maceacharna (1976:94), that the specific here is in fact an ancient Celtic ethnonym. The basis of Maceacharna's claim is the 'hard' quality of the intervocalic /g/ in *Chatrigan, which would normally be lenited in G pronunciation. As Avinlussa in Kilarrow, however, the inexplicability of a name within the normal rules of modern Gaelic grammar, lexis and pronunciation need not point to an ancient origin – especially when the surrounding nomenclature abounds in ON place-name elements. If Ballychatrigan is not wholly G, therefore, it is more likely to represents the G adaptation of an earlier ON name.

Considering the written forms and local pronunciation, there is a slim possibility that derivation is from ON **Kattahryggunum* (dat.), 'the ridge of the cats' – an interpretation which finds support in the prominent ridge of Cnoc a'Mhacain some 100m to the N of the Ballychatrican farm-buildings.[260] Although there are no direct cognates for **Kattahryggunum* in Norway,[261] NR does list hundreds of other nature names containing the element 'katt' (*cf.* NR I:278-9; NR II:289-90; NR III:229) – including numerous examples of 'Kattåsen' *etc.*, 'the ridge of the cats', three of which (2 in Nedenes amt and one in Smaalenenes amt) are listed in NG.

Antiquities:

The **dun** at **Rhubha Na Meise Baine** (NMRS:NR34SW 14) lies about 700m to the SW.

Context:

The steading of **Inveraval** [ˌiːmərəˈvɛːl] lies about 200m to the ENE. While Maceacharna's suggested derivation from G **Iomair a' Mhail*, 'rental rig', is plausible, it must be wondered whether the name is not in fact a reflex of an earlier ON **Innravöllr*, 'inner field/ infield'. Such a derivation could reflect the possible historical situation of Inveraval as the 'infield' of the central steading on Ballychatrigan. NR lists an Indrevoll in Northern Norway (NR III:207), along with an Innvoll, in the central part of the country (NR II: 272) and many hundreds of names beginning 'indre/inner/in' *etc.* throughout (NR I:262-3; NR II:271-3; NR III:206-8).

Casaberry and **Lòn Casaberry** are about 1.1km to the NW (see notes on Asabus above). The farm of **Risabus** [ˈriːʃəˌb̥ɯs] or [ˈrɪːsəˌb̥ɯs] is about 1.95km to the NW, with **Coillabus** [ˈkɯʎəˌb̥ɯs] and **Lower Coillabus** *c.* 2.1km and 1.7km in roughly the same direction. While the name Coillabus is barely attested (*Koilibolls* (1741), *Coslybus* (1749))[262] and Risabus un-attested in early sources, all three of the modern farm-centres appear to fall within the bounds of Ballychatrigan as shown on MacDougall's map. Risabus

[260] It is interesting to note that the Islay pronunciation of the word *cat* in the nom. sing. is [köht] (Grannd 2000:45). As there is no evidence for the vowel in *cat* being realised as [ö] in any other part of the Gaelic speaking world, Grannd (2000:45) assumes this is a recent development resulting from back formation of the plural. It is not outwith the bounds of possibility, however, that this feature is in fact a reflex of ON *köttr* (m).

[261] While there is a mountain known as 'Katiryggen' in northern Norway (NR II:229), the spelling of this name indicates a long vowel sound in the first syllable, inconsistent with an earlier ON **Kötthrygunum* or **Kattahryggunum*.

[262] NB: This name is not covered by Gammeltoft in his 2002 study of *-bólstaðr* names.

can be satisfactorily explained as ON **Hrísabólstaðir*, 'brushwood farm' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:85; Gammeltoft 2001:143) and Coillabus, not as the ON **Kelda Bólstaðr* 'Boggy Farm' suggested by Maceacharna (1976:85), but as ON **Kúlabólstaðr*, 'hilly farm' – reflecting the many undulations in the local topography.

Although Risabus is the site of a manse and now derelict church, this should not, as Olson (1983:173) implies, be taken as an indication of the status of the farm during the Middle Ages. The buildings in question are the result of an early 19th century parliamentary initiative to improve access to places of worship in the West Highlands and Islands (RCAHMS 1984:35, 218). In this particular case, they were built not to reflect the traditional centre of worship in the vicinity, which would have been at Kilnaughton, but to give the best coverage of the Oa peninsula.

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Ballyneal [ˌbaliˈnɛːl]

NR 370 450 (not on OS 1:10,000 or 6 inch (CHECK) maps)

'Balleneil is a very good quarter land, having a good park and a small island in the sea and a good shielding in the muir, called Arwaolchallim, annexed to it' (1722)

Balleneal (1541a) *Ballenele* (1541b) *Balleneyle* (1545) *Balleneill* (1558) *Balleneill* (1614) *Ballaneill* (1627) *Balleneill* (1631) *Balneal* (1654) *Bullaneill* (1662) *Ballaneil* (1665) *Balneill* (1686) *Balleneil* (1722) *Balyneil* (1733) *Balineil* (1741 *Ballyneill* (1749) *Ballyneal* (M)

Etymology: G *baile (m)* + *Niall* (m) 'Niall's townland'.

Associations:

Torrasdull et Balleneyle (1545) *Torrodod et Balleneill* (1558) *Balyneil and Arvolhalm* (1733) *Proaig, Balineil, Arivolhalm* (1741

Antiquities:

The **fort** of **Sron Dubh** (NMRS:NR34NE 40) appears to lie within the bounds of this holding as illustrated on MacDougall's map.

The remains of a possible **chapel** and **burial ground** were identified near **Farkin's Cottage** in 1878. No trace of either remains (NR34NE14).

Context:

The horse-shoe shaped bay on the western side of this district, which now comprises Port Ellen harbour, is known as **Loch Leòdamais** [ˌlɔːx ˈʌioːd̪əmʌ̆s]. Although the onomastic unit *Leòdamais appears to have Norse oigins, there has been some debate as to what these might have been. While Maceacharna's

(1976:75) suggestion of ON **Ljótr* + *mosi*, 'Ljot's moss', is possible, the place in question lacks a clear topographical connection with any 'moss' or moorland. Gillies (1906:157) prefers to see the first element here as the ON adjective *ljótr*, meaning 'ugly' and the generic as 'ON *holmr* + G genitival affix', with the resultant compound being descriptive of the 'ugly rocks' he considers to line the entrance to the harbour. While this too is possible, it is still not entirely convincing. Given that the earlier forms of this name show the generic element beginning with an /n/ rather than an /m/ (the name is Loudans on MacDougal's map and Lowdinas in the Statistical Account (Sinclair 1983:400)), it is possible that derivation is from ON **Ljótanes*, 'ugly headland'. It should be noted, however, there are no exact cognates in Norway or elsewhere in the Norse world and that while *nes* is extremely common in Norwegian place-names (see above), the adjective *ljótr* is not.

The beach at **Tràigh Gheighsgeir** is about half a kilometre further west again; with **Borraichill Mór** and **Beag** and **Brahunisary** all lying within a kilometre and a half to the N (see notes on Tighandrom below).

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*Ballynaughton

Ballynaughtonmore [ˌb̥alɪ ˈnɛːx.kə̆n ˈmoːr]

NR 393 465

Baile Neaghton (1408) *Ballenachtane Wester/ Ballenachtane Westir* (1541b) *de duobus Ballenauchtane* (1545) *de duobus Ballenachtanis* (1558) *Ballenawchtane Westir* (1614) *Ballenauchtan-Westir* (1627) *Ballenachten moir* (1631) *Balnachtan* (1654) *Wester Bellienachtan* (1662) *Wester Bellienachtan* (1665) *Ballanachtane Moir* (1686) *Ballenachtanmore* (1722) *Ballynachtanmore* (1733) *Balnachtanmoir* (1741) *Balinaughtonmore* (1749) *Ballynaghton More* (M)

Etymology: G *baile (m)* + *Nechdán* (m) + *mór* (adj)

G **Baile Neachtain*, with the contrastive modifier *mór*, meaning 'the greater or more important part of *Nechtan's* townland' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Gillies 1906:155; Maceacharna 1976:114).

Associations:

Baile bhicare, [M]ac[aire Learga]riabhoige, Ciontragha, Grastol, Tocamol, W[g]asgog, D[a ghleann a]stol, Cracobus, Cornubus, Baile Neaghton (1408) *Ballenachten moir, Over Lyring and Illand texa* (1631)

Antiquities:

The **fort** of **An Dùnan** (NMRS:NR34NE 8) lies approx 350m to the NW.

Context:

Cnoc Creagascail [ˌkrɔːxk ˈkreːgˠasˌkʌ̆ɬ] lies approx. 500m to the WNW. While this is a recognisably G construct meaning 'the hill of *Creagascail', the terminal onomastic unit could possibly represent an earlier ON *–skáli* (m), 'hall, hut', compound. The specific is obsure, but could be ON **Kraka*, the gen. form of the man's name *Kraki* (see notes on Cragabus below, for further possibilities). If so the probable meaning would be 'Kraki's hut/shieling'.

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Ballynaughton beg [ˌb̥alɪ ˈnɛːx.kə̆n̆ ˈb̥ihkʲ]

NR 394 468

Ballenachtane Estir/ Ballenachtane Eister (1541b) *de duobus Ballenauchtane* (1545) *Ballenawchtane Eistir* (1614) *Ballenauchtan-Eister* (1627) *Ballenachtenbeg* (1631) *Eister Bellienachtan* (1662) *Easter Bellienachtan* (1665) *Balnachtane Beg* (1686) *Ballenachtanbeg* (1722) *Ballynachtan beg* (1733) *Balnachtanbeg* (1741) *Balinaughtonbeg* (1749) *Ballynaghton Beg* (M)

Etymology: G *baile (m)* + *Nechdán* (m) + *beag* (adj)

G **Baile Neachtain*, with the contrastive modifier *beag*, meaning 'the lesser or less important part of Nechtan's townland' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Gillies 1906:155; Maceacharna 1976:114).

Context:

Cnoc Creagascail lies approx. 400m to the W; and **Smithil** [ˈsme.hɪl] **/Abhainn Smithil** [ˌavɪŋ ˈsme.hɪl] about 900m to the NE. These last names can be compared directly with that of the farm-district Smaull [ˈsmɛʔə̆l] in Kilchoman parish. While the written forms appear relatively distinct, they are unified by a very similar pronunciation. In the case of Smaull in the Rhinns, the historical forms support an origin in ON **Smjörvöllr*, literally 'butter-field' but alluding to lushness of pasture. Considering that the Smithil in Kildalton coincides with a patch of relatively dry and fertile land surrounded by more boggy ground, the same etymology might also be expected here (see notes on Smaull in Kilchoman for further discussion).

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Callumkill [ˌkałʌm ˈçiːʎə̆]

NR 408 465

Killcallumkill (1541a) *Kilcallumkill* (1541b) *Kilcallumkill* (1558) *Kilcalumkill* (1614) *Kilcallumkill* (1627) *Keilchallumkeill* (1631) *Kilcholmkil* (1654) *Kilcallumkill* (1662) *Kilcalumkill* (1665) *Keilchallmukeill* (1686) *Kilcallumkeill* (1722) *Kilcolmkill* (1733) *Kilcolmkill* (1741) *Collumkill* (1749) *Killcolumkill* (M)

Etymology: G *cill (f)* + *Callum-cille* (m)

G **Cille Challumcille*, 'the church of St Columba', founding father of the monastery on Iona (Watson 1926:280; Maceacharna 1976:52).

Associations:

Dunoyik, Killcallumkill and Largebrak, Iletor, Drumcurrane (1541a) *Ardrudanis, Dunoyik, Kilcallumkill and Largbrak, Iletor, Drumcurran* (1541b) *Downoyik, Kilcalumkill, Largbrak, Iletor, Drumcurrane* (1614) *Kilcallumkill et Largbrak* (1627) *Kilcallumkill et Largobraik* (1662) *the other half of Ardtalloch, Ardbrodneis, Donozick, Kilcalumkill and Largobronk* (1665) *2' of Largybrecht* (1733) *Clagnagaroch, ½ Solum, Largybrecht, Kilcolmkill, Island Texell* (1741)

Antiquities:

Although local tradition associates this site with a **chapel** dedicated to St Columba, the building is now gone and its exact location is unkown (NMRS:NR44NW 26).

Dùn Dearg (NMRS:NR44NW 19) lies approx. 250m to the ENE and the **dun** at **Gleann Buidhe** (NMRS:NR44NW 18) 600m to the NNW.

Context:

Tundal lies approx. 1.5km to the ENE (see notes on Airigh nam Beist above); **Eilean Imersay** approx. 1.7km to the ESE (see notes on Ardimersay above) and **Smithil/ Abhainn Smithil** about 1.5km to the NW (see notes on Ballynaughton Mor above).

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Claggain [ˈkla.g̊ʲɪŋ]

'Clagincarrach a very good toun for pasturage and fattning [and] gendering of cattle' (1722)

NR 460 533

Clagintarroch (1545) *Clagintarroch* (1558) *Olagewnach* (1662) *Clagincarrach* (1686) *Clagincarrach* (1722) *Claigin* (1749) *Clagin* (M)

Etymology: G *Claigionn* (m)

This name appears to be derived from G **Claigionn.* While Thomas (MS) translates this as 'skull', Gillies (1906:146) points out that it is also applied figuratively to a 'field of the best land' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:115) – an interpretation which finds a certain amount of support in the relatively high quality of arable on this farm-district. Ó Fogluda (ND:19) lists a Clagan (Claigeann) in Limerick, Ireland.

Associations:

Clagincarrach and Trudernis (1686)

Antiquities:

The remains of the **burial ground** of **Cill an Ailein** are on the E side of the old farm compound. They comprise of a sub-circular enclosure with a maximum diameter of about 12m (NMRS:NR45SE 4).

Context:

The names of the shingle beach of **Bàgh Rubh' a'Bhuic** [ˌba: ˌru: ə̆.ˈʊu:ixç] and overlooking headland of **Rubh' a'Bhuic**, some 450m to the SE are interesting. While these appear to be simple G appellatives for 'the Bay of the Point of-' and 'the Point of the Buck/ Billy Goat' respectively, it is possible that the 'Bhuic' common to both is in fact a G adaptation of a pre-existing ON **Vík* 'Bay' – referring perhaps to Claggain Bay itself.

Cnoc Raonadail [ˌkrɔ:xk ˈrø:nəˌd̥ăɬ] lies c.200m to the N of the farm. As with Cnoc Rhaonasdill (below), there are a number of possible interpretations of this name. Considering that the valley here is still relatively heavily wooded and that the remnant forest includes multiple stands of rowan, it is perhaps most likely that the original was ON **Reynadalr*, 'the valley of the rowan trees'.

If we follow the **Claggain River** some 3 or 4km inland it passes through a **Gleann Leòra** [ˌg̊laõ:nə̆ ˈʎio:rə]. This name appears to preserve an ON **Leirá*, 'the river with the muddy banks' – an apt description of large stretches of this watercourse. According to NSL (202), 'Leira' *etc.* is a very common river-name in Norway (*cf.* NR I:343-4 *etc.*)

Cnoc Rhaonastil [ˌkrɔːxk ˈrøːnasd̥ʌ̆ɬ]

'Knockrinsey and Ardelistie is a good possession for stock; and has one small isle annexed to it' (1722).

NR 438 487

Knokrowin (1545) *Knokrenissale* (1550) *Knokrenissale* (1554) *Knok(r)anissaile* (1599) *Knokranisale* (1629) *Knockrinsay* (1631) *Knockrÿnea* (1654) *Knokryndsay* (1686) *Knockrinsey* (1722) *Knock* (1733) *Knock* (1741) *Knock* (1749) *Knockronisdill* (M)

Etymology: G *cnoc* (m) + (ON *Hreinn* (m) OR *hraun* (n) + *salr* (m))

While derivation from an earlier Norse *Rhaonastil seems likely, neither the specific nor generic element are particularly transparent. Maceacharna's (1976:75) explanation of the specific as ON *reynir* (m) 'rowan-tree' (*cf.* Gillies1906:237) is supported by the small stands of rowan which can still be found in the remnant woodlands of Kildalton. However, a specific of ON *hraun* (n) in the sense of 'rough', would also provide an apt description for the local terrain. A further possibility is ON *hreinn* (m). Although the principal meaning of this word is 'reindeer', which is unlikely to have found literal inspiration in Islay, it was also a common Icelandic personal name (CVC:283). A final alternative would be to see the specific preserving the Norse name for the Ardilitry River, which loops round the Cnoc. ON **Rein(a)* 'the flowing or running one' is a common river-name in Norway (*cf.* NSL:252-3). Similarly, the name Rendall in Orkney, which is borne by a parish and the ½ urisland holding at its centre, has been interpreted by Marwick as **Rennudalr* after the stream **renna*, which runs through the tunship (Marwick 1952:119 & 121).

Figure 81: Cnoc Rhaonastil from Loch Iarnan: Note the absence of valleys!

While the generic is usually seen as ON *dalr* (m), 'valley' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:75; Gillies 1906:237), this is hardly consistent with the absense of all but the most insignificant of trenches in the vicinity. Neither is it supported by the the earlier forms of the name. In particular, the stop which is assumed to represent the initial phoneme in *dalr*, is not recorded until 1686. This raises the possibilty that the supposedly genitive /s/ is in fact (also) the first phoneme in the generic element. Given that the most conspicuous topographical feature for miles around is the conical hill of *Cnoc Rhaonastil* (109m), it is possible, therefore, that the generic here is ON **salr* (m) and the compound **Hraunsalr*, 'stone saddle':

referring to the appearance of the mountain. According to NSL (p.266) the element *sal* from ON *söðull* 'saddle' is used of mountains in Norway which look like saddles and occasionally, through transference, of farms. A second alternative would be to see *salr* as 'hall, farm' and the compound as **Hreinssalr*, 'Hrein's hall/ farm'. While there are no exact cognates, both *Hreinn* and *salr* (Indl:73; NSL:266) are common in Norwegian place-names. The current G name of the local farm-steading, **Tigh Rhaonastil**, the house of *Rhaonastil, may be significant in this respect. While there are no early references to this name, it appears to conform to the common Islay phenomenon whereby post-Norse Gaelic place-names have been created by the addition of an effectively tautological Gaelic generic to a pre-existing ON compound (see, for example: Glenastle, Glenegedale, (Eilean) Texa and (Àird) Trudernish below).

Associations:

Hardharnoill et Knokrowin (1545) *Knokrenissale, Ardarraucht, Ardalesyne, Argary* (1550) *Knokrenissale, Ardararicht, Ardalesin, Argarne* (1554) *Knok(r)anissaile, Ardaraicht, Ardalesyne, Argarey* (1599) *Knokranisale, Ardararicht, Ardalysyne, Argary* (1629) *Knockrinsay, Ardelistie, Arigearie* (1631) *Knokryndsay, Ardelistie, and Arrizearne* (1686) *Knockrinsey and Ardelistie* (1722) *Knock and Ardelister* (1733) *Knock & Ardelester* (1741)

Context:

The summit of the highly conspicuous **Cnoc Rhaonastil** (109m) is about 300m to the W of the present day settlement at **Tigh Rhaonastil** (the house at/of R.). **Ardilistry River/ Bay**, about 150m to the SE offers shelter, anchorage and beaching (see above). **Rhubha Thòrrnish** lies about 400m to the SSW (see notes on Ardilistry above).

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Cragabus [Middle] [ˌmɪd̥ ˈkraːg̊əˌb̥ɯs]

'Cragabols a very good penni-worth of land, very good for sowing' (1722)

NR 326 451

Cracobus (1408) *Cragapolis* (1541a) *Cragapolis* (1541b) *Kagabolsay* (1562) *Craigabolsay* (1563) *Cragabolse* (1584) *Graigapols* (1614) *Gragapols* (1627) *Cracobols over* (1631) *Cracobols nether* (1631) *Gragapolis* (1662) *Gragapolis* (1665) *Cragbollis, Over and Nather* (1686) *Cragabolls* (1722) *Cragabolls* (1733) *Cragebolls* (1741) *Cragabus* (1749) *Cragabus* (M)

Etymology: ON ?*Kraki* (m) + *bólstaðr* (m)

While the generic here is quite clearly ON *bólstaðr*, the specific is not quite so easy to identify. Maceacharna (1976:85) offers the rather unconvincing explanation of G *creag*, 'hill', borrowed locally into ON to refer the nearby burial mound. There are, however, a whole range of ON words that fit the phonemic and topographic bills a whole lot better. Thomas' suggestion of ON **kraki* (m), meaning, 'pale,

stake' and referring to the standing stones on a nearby knoll seems plausible; as does Gillies' (1906:226) offering of ON *kráka*, (f) or *krákr* (m) meaning 'crow' – in reference to a resident population of crows. The rook (*Corvus frugilegus*) and hooded crow (*Corvus cornix*) are both widespread in Islay (Ogilvie 2003:56-7). A futher possibility is the ON male personal name *Kraki*. Although Gammeltoft (2001:109) rejects this on the basis of its extremely limited distribution – with the only two non-Norwegian examples being found in Iceland – it seems more likely that a farm will have been named after a man with a rare name than a type of bird which is common all over the island.

Associations:

Baile bhicare, [M]ac[aire Learga]riabhoige, Ciontragha, Grastol, Tocamọl, W[g]asgog, D[a ghleann a]stol, Cracobus, Cornubus, Baile Neaghton (1408) *Killaane, S[t]romynisbege, Cragapolis, Glennastell Ochterach* (1541a) *Killaane, Stromynisbeg, Cragapolis, Glenestell Ochterach* (1541b) *Killaane, Scromynisbeg, Gragapols, Glennestell Ochterach* (1614)

Antiquities:

The **dun** at **Cnoc Boglach Na Fola** (NMRS:NR34NW 17) lies about a kilometre to the NW.

Context:

The **Cragabus Burn** flows past the farm buildings; **Corrary Hill** lies about 30m to the NNW (see notes on Corr Airidh/ Corary in Kilarrow parish); the two **Coillabus** approx. 1.5km to the SSW and **Risabus** about 1.8km to the SW (see notes on Ballychatrigan above); and **Torran Eigadaill** [tɔ.rə̆n eːg̊ɛˌd̥ə̆ɬ] is approx. 750m to the ENE. Although this last construct is G, meaning 'the little hill of *Eigadaill, the terminal onomastic unit appears to be adapted from ON **Eikadalr* 'valley of the oak-trees' – of which small remnant stands can still be found in the vicinity (see notes on Glenegedale below, for further discussion of this compound).

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Creagfinn [ˌkreːˈkʲiːñ]

NR 453 522

Craggin (1541a) *Craggin* (1541b) *Cragfne* (1545) *Cragfyn* (1558) *Craggin* (1614) *Gragin [vel Craggan]* (1627) *Craggin* (1662) *Cragine* (1665) *Craigfin* (1686) *Craigfine* (1722) *Craigfin* (1733) *Craigfin* (1741) *Craigeen* (1749) *Craigfin* (M)

Etymology: G *creag* (f) + *fionn* (adj)

While Maceacharna (1976:116) suggests G **Creag Fhinn*, 'Fionn's rock', Thomas' (MS) explanation of G **Creag Fionn*, 'white rock', is finds clearer support in both local pronunciation and patches of exposed quartzite in the area and. No cognate examples for either are listed in Hogan or Ó Fogluda.

Associations:

Craigfin and Ballindeor (1686) *Craigfin, Trudernish* (1741)

Antiquities:

The **dun** of **Dùn Fhinn** (NMRS:NR45SW 2) lies *c.* 1km to the SSW.

The remains of the **chapel** of **Cill a'Chubein**, which measure *c.* 9m E-W by 6m over walls *c.* 1.5m thick (NMRS:NR45SE 7), lies approx. 700m to the NNE of Craigfinn. However, as it is also an equal distance from Trudernish and Claggain, is difficult to be clear which holding it lay within.

Context:

Aros Bay and **Tràigh Aros** are about 1.25km to the E (see notes on Kintour below); **Tallent lies** approx. 1.25km to the SSE and **Loch Tallant** *c.* 1.5km to the SSW (see notes on Kildalton below); **Loch Carn a'Mhaoil** [ˌlɔːx ˈkharn ə ˈvøːl] about 1.75km to the SW and **Allt Loch Carn a'Mhaoil** about 1.25km to the SSW. While these last two names are G constructs which appear to convey the meaning of the 'loch' and the 'stream of the cairn of the bare hill' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:1209), it is perhaps just as likely that the onomastic unit *Carn a'Mhaoil is a G rendering of an ON *-fjall*, 'hill/mountain' compound. Considering the very prominent ridge on the NW shore of the loch, it would be reasonable to assume that the specific here was ON *kambr* (m), 'comb/ridge', giving **Kambafjall*, 'the hill of the ridge'. ON *kambr*, in the forms 'kammen' and 'kamben', is a very common element in Norwegian mountain names (NSL:180). NR lists two mountains with the name Kamfjellet in central and one more in northern Norway (II:287; III:226).

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Giol [ˈg̊ʲil]

NR 284 439

Gill (1541a) *Gill* (1541b) *Gill* (1562) *Gill* (1563) *Gill* (1584) *Gill* (1614) *Gill* (1627) *Gill* (1631) *Gil* (1654) *Gill* (1662) *Gill* (1665) *Geill* (1686) *Geill* (1722) *Gill* (1733), *Gill* (1733) *Gill* (1741) *Gioll* (1749) *Gille* (M)

Etymology: ON *gil* (n)

ON **Gil*, 'ravine or gulley' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:156; Maceacharna 1976:81) refering, no doubt, to the deep ravine running form the current farm-centre to the shore. NG lists 11 simplex examples of 'Gil' in Norway bearing the modern (occasionally oblique and/or definite) reflexes Gil, Gilje, Gjølen, Gjælen *etc.* In addition to this, Jónsson (1907-15:526) notes 9 singular (XIII, XV (2), XVI (2), XVII (2), XVIII, XX) and 4 plural (II, IV, VII, XVI) simplex examples in Iceland; Jakobsen (1936:106) 'de Gil o' Skord' above Kollaster in Shetland and Matras (1933:117-9) many more in the Faroes' northern isles. While Marwick (1952:40) records a Gil in Rackwick, Orkney, he also that there are no appropriate natural features in the vicinity.

Associations:

Gill and Glenawstill (1562) *Gill and Glennawstill* (1563) *Gill and Glennawstill* (1584)

Antiquities:

The **fort** of **Dùn Mor Ghil** (NMRS:NR24SE 14) lies approx. 1.3km to the NW.

Context:

Abhainn Ghil (G River Ghil) flows past approx. 500m to the S; and **Allt Ghil lochdrach** (G Stream of Lower Ghil) about 500m to the ON **Loch Kinnabus** is *c.* 1.8km to the SE (see notes on Kinnabus below); and **Glenastle Loch** about 1.5km to the NE (see below).

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*Glenastle [ˌgl̊ɛun ˈasˌd̥ɤ̆ɬ]

NR 302 449 (Upper) Glenastle

NR 289 457 Lower Glenastle

'Glenastill Upper a very cheape pennyworth of land, very good for holding and sowing' (1722)

'Glenastill Nether is a good little possession for stock and sowing' (1722)

D[a ghleann a] stol (1408) *Glennastell Ochterach/ Glennastill Etrach* (1541a) *Glenestell Ochterach/ Glennastill Etrach* (1541b) *Glennawstill Wauchrauche* (1562) *Glennaustill Wchtraich* (1563) *Glenaskilwichroche* (1584) *Glennestell Ochterach*; *Glennastill Etrach* (1614) *Glennestell-ochterach*; *Glennastill Etrach* (1627) *Glenastill Nether/ Glenastillover* (1631) *Glenestill – Ochtorach/ Glennestell – Strach* (1662) *Glensteill Ochtitoroch/ Glensteilletrach* (1665) *Glenastillis, Over and Nather* (1686) *Glenastill Upper/ Glenastill Nether* (1722) *Nether Glenastell/ Upper Glennstell* (1733), *Nether Glenastill/ Uper Glenastill* (1741) *Upper Glenastle; Lower Glenastle* (1749) *Glenastells* (M)

Etymology: G *gleann* + (ON *áss* (m) + *dalr* (m))

Thomas (MS) suggestes G **Gleann Apstol*, 'the glen of the Apostle [with] *apstol* being the old from of G *abstal* which appears in the charter of 1408'. Gillies (1906:156), on the other hand, prefers to see it as G **Gleann (fh)astail*, 'the glen of the holding or dwelling'. Given the local topography, however, which is

dominated by a WE valley and highly conspicuous parallel ridge – and derivation from ON **Ássdalr*, 'the valley of the ridge', is perhaps more likely (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:80). While there are no exact cognates in Norway, the element *áss* (m), in the form 'as', 'ass', 'ås' *etc.* is found in a great many Norwegian farm-names (*cf.* Indl:42).

Associations:

Baile bhicare, [M]ac[aire Learga]riabhoige, Ciontragha, Grastol, Tocamol, W[g]asgog, D[a ghleann a]stol, Cracobus, Cornubus, Baile Neaghton (1408) *Killaane, S[t]romynisbege, Cragapolis, Glennastell Ochterach* (1541a) *Glennastill Etrach* (1541a)*Killaane, Stromynisbeg, Cragapolis, Glenestell Ochterach* (1541b) *Killaane, Scromynisbeg, Gragapols, Glennestell Ochterach*; *Glennastill Etrach* (1614)

Context:

The hill of **Tornabakin** [ˌtɔːr nə ˈb̥aːhkʲɪn], which lies between the two Glenastles, appears to take its name from the effectively tautological addition of G *tòrr* (m), 'hill', to a pre-existing variant of ON *bakki* (m), 'hill'. While Maceacharna (1976:80) saw this as ON *bakkinn*, 'the hill' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:158), it seems unlikely that a definite form preserved in the nomenclature would have beenin the nominative as opposed to dative **Bakkanum* or perhaps accusative **Bakkan*. The likely proximity of the now lost *Tornobelsay*,[263] however, raises the possibility that the whole name is of Norse origins. As *Tornobelsay* can be satisfactorily explained as ON **Þornabólstaðr* 'thorny farm' (*cf.* Gammeltoft 2001:85-6),[264] it is possible that Tornabakin preserves an ON **Þornabakki*, 'thorny hill', perhaps in definite form. While there are no exact cognates, both *þorn* and *bakki* (Indl:49; NSL:64) are fairly common elements in Norwegian place-names. A search for 'þorn%' on NG returned 22 hits.

Loch Glenastle, **Alt Astail** and **Abhainn Alt Astail** are all nearby.

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Glen Egedale [ˌgl̥ɛun ˈɛːg̊ɛˌd̥ɤ̆ɬ]

'Gleneigadill a spacious quarter land, muire and shore alike good for holding and sowing' (1722)

NR 333 517

Glenegadill (1499) *Glennegadale* (1507) *Glenmygadale* (1509) *Glennagadale* (1541a) *Glennagadale* (1541b) *Glennagadill* (1562) *Glennagadull* (1563) *Glenegedell* (1631) *Glenagadell* (1662) *Glenegadell* (1662) *Glenagedill* (1584) *Glennagadill* (1614) *Glennagadill* (1627) *Glennagadill* (1627) *Glenegadill* (1654) *Glengaddill/ the other half [of Glengaddill]* (1665) *Glenegadill* (1686) *Gleneigadell* (1722) *Glenegedill* (1741) *Glenegidale* (1749) *Glenegidale* (M)

[263] See notes on Tokmal below.
[264] It should be noted, however, that Gammeltoft's extension of this etymology to Torabus in Kilmeny is seriously flawed.

Etymology: G *gleann* (m) + (ON *eik* (f) + *dalr* (m))

From the effectively tautological addition of G *gleann*, 'valley' to ON **eikadalr*, 'the valley of the oak-trees' (Thomas MS; Macheacharna 1976:82; Gillies 1906:151). Native oak-trees that can still be found in the valley today (Figure 82).

Associations:

Glenegadill + Tycarmakan (1499) *Glennegadale et in Carmagane* (1507) *terrarium de Glenmygadale et Carmagane* (1509) *Eskcok, Glennagadale* (1541a) *Eskcog, Glennagadale* (1541b) *Glennagadill* (1562) *Glennagadull* (1563) *Glenagedill* (1584) *Eskcok, Glennagadill (one half), Glennagadill (other half), Kilelane* (1614) *Glennagadill* (1627) *alterius dimidietatis de Glennagadill* (1627) *Glenegedell* (1631) *Glenegadill* (1654) *Glenagadell* (1662) *alterius dimidietatis de Glenegadell* (1662) *Glengaddill* (1665) *the other half [of Glengaddill], Delilun, Kynegarie, Laggan, Donach, Ardlarach, Corrurre and Ilanamusk* (1665) *Glenegadill* (1686) *Gleneigadell* (1722) *Glenegedill* (1741) *Glenegidale* (1749)

Antiquities:

The **dun** at **Cnoc Grianail** [ˌkrɔːxk ˈgr̊iːʔn̆əl] or [ˌkrɔːxk ˈgr̊iːanʌ̆ɬ] lies approx. 800m to the N (NMRS:NR35SW 9). **Creagan Grianail** is nearby. The element *Grianail, which appears in both of these names, is likely to be from ON **Grænvöllr*, 'green field' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:152; Maceacharna 1976:79) or possibly **Grænahóll* 'green hill' – both of which would be reasonably descriptive of the surrounding topography. Although derivations from ON **Grænahóll* appear to be relatively uncommon in Norway, NR lists dozens of examples of 'Grøn(e)voll(en)' *etc.* (*cf.* NR I:180-2: NR II:191; NR III:155); with Marwick (255:55 & 91) recording two farms named Greenwall in Orkney.

Figure 82: Oak-trees in Glenegedale

Context:

Gleann Egedale and **Glenegedale River** are adjacent to the farm buildings. **Loch na Maolaig** about 1.8km to the SSE (see notes on Arivoichallum above); and **Cnoc Aingil** [ˌkrɔːxk ˈɛŋ.g̊ɪl] approx. 1.65km to the WSW. Gillies (1906:157) sees this last name as G '*cnoc + aingil*' meaning 'the fire hillock, referring to the hillock on which watch-fires or need fires, were lit'. Cnoc Aingill, however, does not describe a hillock, but a solitary, rocky outcrop on the seaward edge of the machair, which is almost completely submerged at high tide – not the most suitable location for a fire of any kind. A more likely explanation would be that it derives from a variant of the ON noun *öngull* (m), meaning 'angle or (fish) hook' and alluding to the suitability of the rocks as a fishing place (*cf.* Slyngstad (1951:95), who

discusses the cognate Norwegian verb *ongla* 'to fish with hooks'; and Kruse (2000:241-2), who discusses Onglan 'a fishing place at sea').

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Grasdale [ˈgra:sˌd̥ɤ̆ɬ]

NR 300 475

Grastol (1408) *Grawstill* (1541a) *Grawstill* (1541b) *Grunstill* (1562) *Grawstill* (1563) *Granstell* (1584) *Grawstill* (1614) *Grawstill* (1627) *Groustill* (1662) *Gronstill* (1665) *Crawstill* (1686) *Grastill* (1722) *Grastell* (1733) *Grastill* (1741) *Grassdale* (1749) *Grastell* (M)

Etymology: ON *gras* (n) + *dalr* (m)

An original ON **Grasdalr*, 'Grassy Valley' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:156) would certainly agree with the local topography. While NG lists only two examples of the farm-name 'Grasdal' – in Romsdals amt and Søndre Bergenhus amt respectively – the compound 'Grasdal' *etc.*, as either an independent construct or an *ex nomine* onomastic unit in dependent constructs, is otherwise relatively common in Norway (*cf.* NRI:168-9; NRII:177; NRIII:148).

Associations:

Baile bhicare, [M]ac[aire Learga]riabhoige, Ciontragha, Grastol, Tocamol, W[g]asgog, D[a ghleann a]stol, Cracobus, Cornubus, Baile Neaghton (1408) *Grawstill and Kintray* (1541a) *Grawstill and Kintray* (1541b) *Grawstill et Kintray* (1614) *Grawstill et Kintray* (1627) *Groustill et Kintray* (1662) *Gronstill and Kintray* (1665) *Crawstill, Keantra, and Wgistok* (1686), *Kintra & grastill* (1722) *Keantra, Grastell* (1733), *Kentra, Grastill, Tockumill, Machrie* (1741),

Antiquities:

The **dun** of **Dùn a'Chail** lies approx. 750m to the WSW (NMRS:NR34NW 21) guarding the eastern approach to the sheltered sandy bay of **Port Alsaig** [ˌpɔrt ˈɔɬ.siɡ̊ʲ]. The terminal onomastic unit *Alsaig is clearly an ON *–vík* compound. Although Maceacharna (1976:80) saw it as ON **Halsvík* which he interpreted as a lexically plausible 'bay of the slope', this is not how similar constructs have been interpreted in Norway. NG lists two examples of Halsvik (1 each in Nordre Bergenhus and Sødre Bergenhus amt). According to Rygh, the specific in these is ON *hals*, meaning 'narrow tongue of land between two bodies of water' (*cf.* Indl:53), which would certainly not agree with local topography in the case of Port Alsaig in Islay. It seems more likely, as suggested by Gillies (1906:222), that the name is ON **Állsvík*, 'narrow/deep bay' (*cf.* Indl:41). This is supported by the local topography and the dozen or so Norwegian examples of Alsvika *etc.* listed in NR (NR I:3; NR II:3; NR III:6).

Context:

Cnoc Mór Ghraisdail is a significant natural feature approx. 800m to the ENE; **Maol Ghrasdal** *c.* 2km to the SSE; and **Frachdale** *c.* 1.6km to the ESE (see notes on Kintraw below).

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Kilbride [ˌkʲilə ˈvriːʤ]

NR 383 467

Kilbreid Ovir (1541a) *Kilbreid Ovir* (1541b) *Two Kirkbreiddis* (1614) *Kilbreid Ovir* (1614) *Kilbreid* (1614) *De duabus lie Kilbreidis* (1627) *Kilbreid-Over* (1627) *Kilbreid* (1627) *Kilbryd* (1631) *duabus Kilbreyds* (1662) *Kilbreidovir* (1662) *the two Kilbryds* (1665) *Kilbryd Ovir* (1665) *Kilbryd* (1665) *Kilbryd* (1686) *Kilbryd* (1722) *Kilbryde* (1733) *Kilbride* (1741) *Kilbride* (1749) *Killbride* (M)

Etymology: G *cill (f)* + *Brigid* (f)

While Thomas (MS) favoured G **Cille Bhrighde*, 'St Bridget's Church'; and Maceacharna (1976:119 but *cf.* 52) G **Cille Bhride*, 'St Bride's church'; the proliferation of female saints bearing the name Brigid increases the likeliehood of the former (*cf.* Watson 1926:274-6).

Associations:

Kilbryd and Calldaltoun (1665)

Antiquities:

The remains of the **chapel** of **Cill Bhride**, measuring *c.* 12.2m E-W by *c.* 6.9m over walls about 1m thick, lie about 250m to the W. While these ruins are thought to date to the 17th century, the cross-slab known as *Crois an t'Sagairt*, 'the priests cross', which previously stood *c.* 3m to the E of the church but is now in the NMS in Edinburgh, has been dated on stylistic grounds to a period covering the 7th to 9th centuries AD (NMRS:NR34NE 6).

Context:

Kilbride River flows past the farm buildings about 300m to the SW; **Cnoc Creagascail** lies approx. 500m to the E; and **Smithil/Abhainn Smithil** about 1.7km to the ENE (see notes on Ballynaughton Beg above).

Borrachill Mór (156m) and **Borrachill Beag** are both within 1.5km to the W. Derivation appears to be from ON **Borga(r)fjall*, 'the hill of the fort(s)' with the G contrastive modifiers *mór* and *beag*, 'greater'

and 'lesser'. The summit of each is crowned with an Iron Age fortifications (*cf.* notes on Ardtalla above).[265]

The farm-buildings at **Brahunisary** [ˌb̥ra ˈhuːnɪsˌəri] are about 700m to the WSW. While Thomas (MS) suggests derivation from G **Bràigh an fhas-airidh*, 'upland of the vacant sheiling', this does not accord well with the local pronunciation, where the main stress is on the first syllable of *Hunisary. A more convincing explanation is that the name is a compound of G *bràighe* (m), upper part/ 'brae' and a pre-existing ON **Hundsærgi*, 'the sheiling of the hound (either literally, figuratively or as a man-s by-name)': *cf.* 'Hundsheljer' in Shetland, which Jakobsen (1936:146) derives from ON **Hundshellir* ('dog-vae(s)). See notes on Airigh nam Beist above, and *Ellister in Kilchoman for further discussion of the element *hund*.

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Kildalton [ˌkʲɪlʔ ˈdalʔtʃaŋ]

NR ?450 500

Kildalltan (1549) *Kildaltoune* (1614) *Kildaltoun* (1627) *Kildalckan* (1654) *Kildaltoun* (1662) *Calldaltoun* (1665) *Kildaltane* (1686) *Kildaltan* (1686) *Kildaltan* (1722) *Kildaltane* (1722) *Kildalton* (1722) *Kildaltan* (1733) *Kildalton* (1733) *Kildaltan* (1741) *Kildalton* (1749) *Killdallton* (M)

Etymology: G *cill (f)* + *daltan* (m)

G **Cille Daltan*, 'the church of the fosterbrother/ disciple *etc.* of our Lord (=St John the Evangelist)' (Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:52).

Associations:

Kildaltoun, cum [...] Downyvaig [...] Laggane (1627) *Kildalckan* (1654) *Kildaltoun, cum castro Dournivaig (Dounivaig), et burgum baroniæ de Laggan; omnes unitas in barroniam de Ilay* (1662) *Kilbryd and Calldaltoun* (1665) *Kildaltan and Tallalan* (1686) *Ardmoir, Ardmenisn, Kildaltan* (1741)

Antiquities:

The remains of the old parish **church**, measuring *c.* 19.1m E-W by 7.5 m over walls *c.* 90cm thick and standing at NR458508 are amongst the largest in Islay (NMRS:NR45SE 3.00). This church, which was an independent parsonage in the gift of the Bishops of the Isles, served the medieval parish of Kildalton. Although the earliest reference dates to 1425 (RCAHMS 1984:206), the surrounding **burial ground** contains what is understandably regarded to be the one of the finest **early Christian crosses** in Britain.

[265] These structures do not appear to be located within the bounds of Kilbride as shown on MacDougalls map but the two un-named holdings to its immediate W – the 'Two Kirkbreiddis' of 1614?

Dated to around 800 AD on typological grounds, this cross points to the high status (ecclesiastical?) use of the site in the pre-Norse period (NMRS:NR45SE 3.03). A number of other stone crosses and cross carvings have been found in the vicinity thought to cover the period from the 10th to the 18th centuries. Three slabs decorated with considerably less sophisticated outline crosses are also thought to date to the early Christian period. There is however, no evidence of a vallum which might be indicative of an early monastic settlement (NMRS:NR45SE 3.02).

The **dun** of **Dùnan Charmaic** (RCAHMS 1984:110/ NR449503) is likely to have lain within the bounds of this holding as illustrated on MacDougall's map; as is the **fort** of **Loch nan Clach** (NMRS:NR45SW 5).

Context:

Loch Carn a'Mhaoil is about 1.9km to the W of the churchyard; with **Allt Loch Carn a'Mhaoil** a little closer (see notes on Creagfinn above).

Tallant farm about 500m to the W and **Loch Tallant** some 1.8km to the WSW. The location of this steading today, on an elevated patch of comparatively high quality land, suggests derivation from ON **Há(va)land*, 'high farm' (see notes on Ardtalla above; and Tallent in Killarrow for further discussion).

Talderant (1541a) *Talderant* (1541b) *Tallaland* (1545) *Talland* (1558) *Talderant* (1614) *Talderant* (1627) *Kildaltan and Tallalan* (1686)

Aros Bay/ Tràigh Aros are *c.* 1.3km to the NE (see notes on Trudernish below). **Glas Uig** lies *c.* 1.4km to the ENE (see notes on Ardmeinach above).

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*Killeyan [ˌkʲilˈɛːɪn]

'Killean is a very good possession, and the mylne there of the best pennie worth of a mylne in the island' (1722)

NR 281 419 (Upper Killeyan)

NR 277 431 (Lower Killeyan)

Killaane (1541a) *Killaane* (1541b) *Killeyane* (1562) *Killyayan* (1563) *Killeagan* (1584) *Killaane* (1614) *Killaan* (1627) *Gilleaan* (1631) *Kalenan* (1654) *Kilarenie* (1662) *Killoane* (1686) *Killean* (1722) *Killean* (1722) *Killean* (1733) *Killean* (1741) *Lower & Upper Kileyan* (1749) *Killean* (M)

Etymology: G *cill (f)* + *Aedhan* (m) OR *Eathain* (m)

Thomas (MS) sees this name as G **Cille Aedhan*, 'Aidan's Church'. Maceacharna (1976:52), on the other hand, suggests derivation from G **Cill Eathain* and a dedication to the biblical saint, John. If this latter

explanation is correct, it is likely to point to a later medieval coinage, when biblical as opposed to 'Celtic' saints stood at the forefront of Roman Catholic cult practice (see Chapters 7 and 8).

Associations:

Killaane, S[t]romynisbege, Cragapolis, Glennastell Ochterach (1541a) *Killaane, Stromynisbeg, Cragapolis, Glenestell Ochterach* (1541b) *Killaane, Scromynisbeg, Gragapols, Glennestell Ochterach* (1614) *of Killean* (1722) *Miln of Killean* (1733) *Changehouse of Killean* (1733)

Antiquities:

The ruins of the **chapel** of **Cill Eathain**, consisting of a mound measuring *c.* 5m NE-SW by 3.5m (NMRS:NR24SE 1) lie within a suspected **burial ground** *c.* 300m to the NE of Lower Killeyan on the south bank of Abhainn Ghil; and the remains of a possible **dun** at **Lower Killeyan** (NMRS:NRSE 15) *c.* 300m to the W.

Context:

Loch Kinnabus lies approx. 1.9km to the ESE (see above).

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Kilnaughton [ˌkʲiˈlɛxkə̆n] (not in Thomas)

'Kilnachtan and Cornibuss a compact pretty little possession for holding' (1722)

NR 344 451

Kilnachtan (1507) *Kilnachtane* (1509) *Kilnauchtoun* (1627) *Kilnachten* (1631) *Kilnachtan* (1654) *Kilnauchtan* (1662) *Kilnauchtoun* (1665) *Kilnachtane* (1686) *Kilnachtan* (1722) *Kilnachtane* (1722) *Kilnachtan* (1733) *Kilnachtan* (1741) *Killnachtan* (1741) *Kilnaughton* (1749) *Killnaghton* (M)

Etymology: G *cill (f)* + *Nechdán* (m)

G **Cill Neachdáin*, 'the church of Nechtáin' (Watson 1926:308; Maceacharna 1976:53).

Associations:

Kilnachtan (1507) *Kilnachtane* (1509) *Kilnauchtoun, Baldferssoun [vel Balfersson] et Baldviccar [vel Balviccar]* (1627) *Kilnachten* (1631) *Kilnachtan* (1654) *Kilnauchtan, Beldesertoun et Beldeviccar* (1662) *Kilnauchtoun, Beildfersone and Delbeviccar* (1665) *Kilnachtane, Cornabollis and Cornaschalvag* (1686), *Kilnachtan* (1722) *Kilnachtane* (1722), *Cornabus and Kilnachtan* (1733) *Changehouse of Kilnachtan* (1733) *Cornubolls and Kilnachtan* (1741) *Changehouse of Killnachtan* (1741) *Kilnaughton & Cornabus* (1749)

Antiquities:

The remains of the **chapel** of **Cill Neachdain**, *c.* 13.7m E-W by *c.* 6.5m over walls *c.* 1m thick, thought to date in part to the 13th century (NMRS:NR34NW 5), lie within their burial ground near the shore at Kilnaughton Bay.

Although there are no references to a separate parish of Kilnaughton before the Reformation, one early 17th century account mentions the 'the two parishes in this part calld Largki, called Kildaltan and Kilnachtan' (RCAHMS 1984:373). Moreover, when proposals for a new parish church at Lagavulin were made in 1651, it was agreed that 'the twa old paroaches of Kildaltan and Kilnachten be the paroache of the said new kirk' (BI 481).

Context:

Imeraval and **Port Imeraval** are about a kilometre to the ENE; and **Torran Eigadaill** about a kilometre to the WNW (see notes on Cragabus above). While the **Cornabus Burn** flows in to **Kilnaughton Bay** *c.* 300m to the NE, **Cornabus** farm itself lies *c.* 1.6km to the NNW.

Cornabus ['kɔːr ˌnəʊ̯ʊs]

NR 334 464

Cornubus (1408) *Cornepollis* (1541a) *Cornepollis* (1541b) *Cornepollis* (1542), *Cornepollis* (1614) *Cornepollis* (1627) *Cornabols* (1631) *Cornabols* (1631) *Cornepolis* (1662) *Conrepolis* (1665) *Cornabollis* (1686) *Conibuss* (1722), *Cornabus* (1733) *Cornubolls* (1741) *Cornabus* (1749)

Etymology: ON *korn* (n) + *bólstaðr* (m)

While Gammeltoft considers the medial vowel here to be a svarbhakti (*cf.* Chapter 6), there is a possibility that it represents the terminal genitive /a/, of the man's name Korni (*cf.* NSL:189). Given the limestone bedrock which makes this area one of the most fertile in Kildalton, however, derivation is perhaps more likely to be from ON **Kornabólstaðr*, 'the steading of the corn' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Gillies 1906:226; Macheacharna 1976:85; Gammeltoft 2001:109).

Associations:

Baile bhicare, [M]ac[aire Learga]riabhoige, Ciontragha, Grastol, Tocamol, W[g]asgog, D[a ghleann a]stol, Cracobus, Cornubus, Baile Neaghton (1408) *Ballephersoun and Cornabols* (1631) *Kilnachtane, Cornabollis and Cornaschalvag* (1686) *Cornabus and kilnachtan* (1733) *Cornubolls and Kilnachtan* (1741) *Kilnaughton & Cornabus* (1749)

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Kinnabus [kʲɪnəˌb̥ʊs]

NR 294 424

Kinnibolls (1741) *Kinabus* (1749) *Kinabus* (M)

Etymology: ON *kinn* (f) + *bólstaðr* (m)

Thomas (MS), suggests ON **Kinnarbólstaðr*, 'farm on the cheek (of land)' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:225; Maceacharna 1976:85; Gammeltoft 2001:129), by analogy with the place-names Kinnastaðir and Kinnabrekkur in Iceland where the generic is thought to have been used figurative in reference to nearby smooth cliff faces or smooth perpendicular rocky faces (*cf.* Jónsson 1907-15:561-2). While there are several relatively steep slopes near the present Kinnabus farm-buildings, a more likely source of inspiration for this specific can be found in the dramatic cliffs around Dùn Athad at the S extremity of the farm-district.

Associations:

Kinnibolls, with Miln and Changehouse (1741), *Kinabus* (1749)

Antiquities:

The possible **crannog** of Cairn Daibhidh in Loch Kinnabus (NMRS:NR24SE 12) lies *c.* 500m to the WSW; and the **promontory fort** of **Dùn Athad** (NMRS:NR24SE 3) approx. 2km to the SSW. It has been argued that the name of this fort preserves the Atha Cassil of the *Senchus fer nAlban* (Chapter 8).

Context:

Loch Kinnabus is approx. 200m to the E; **Asabus** about 900m to the WNW (see above); and **Cnoc na Corra Mhaoil** 600m to the WNW (see notes on Arivoichallum above)

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Kintour [ˌkʲɪn ˈd̥uːrə]

NR 547 513

'Aros, Kenture, and Stein, a spacious quarter land, very good for stock, being in three separate divisions' (1722)

Kentour (1499) *Chantor alias Kinror* (1507) *Chantor alias Kintyr* (1509) *Kentur* (1541a) *Kenture* (1541b) *Kantowr* (1545) *Kaintwr* (1558) *Keandur* (1654) *Kenture* (1614) *Kenture* (1627) *Kenkure* (1662) *Kenture* (1665) *Keanturr* (1686) *Kenture* (1722) *Kenture* (1722) *Kentur* (1722) *Keantour* (1733) *Keantour* (1733) *Keantour* (1733) *Kaintour* (1741) *Kentoor* (1749) *Kintoure* (M)

Etymology: G *ceann* (m) + *torr* (m)

G **Ceann tùrra*, 'To[we]r head' (Thomas MS). Maceacharna (1976:74), suggests that the 'tower' element in this name refers to the nearby fort of **Creagan Na Ceardaich Moire** (see below).

Associations:

Chantor alias Kinror (1507) *Terrarum de Chantor alias Kintyr* (1509) *Aroes and Keanturr* (1686) *Aros and Kenture* (1722) *Aros, Kenture, and Stein* (1722) *Mylne of Kentur* (1722) *Arras & Keantour* (1733) *Miln of Keantour* (1733) *Changehouse of Keantour* (1733) *Arras and Kaintour; Miln and Changehouse of Arras and Kaintour* (1741)

Antiquities:

The **fort** of **Creagan Na Ceardaich Moire** (NMRS:NR45SE 25) is approx. 300m to the S.

Context:

The **Kintour River**, flows around the farm building on the N and E. **Tallent** is *c.* 0.6km and **Loch Tallent** *c.* 1.4km to the SW (see notes on Kildalton above). The bays of **Port Mór**, **Aros Bay** (see notes on Trudernish below) and **Glas Uig** (see notes on Ardmeinach above).

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Kintra [ˌkʲɪnˈtraː]

'Kintra and Grastill very good for sowing and stock, the best pennie-worth in the whole parish'

NR 320 483

Ciontragha (1408) *Kintray* (1541a), *Kintray* (1541b) *Kentrahave* (1562) *Kentray* (1563) *Kentra* (1584) *Kintray* (1614) *Kintray* (1627) *Kintra* 1631) *Keand Tra* (1654) *Kintray* (1662) *Kintray* (1665) *Keantra* (1686), *Kintra* (1722) *Keantra* (1733) *Grastill* (1741) *Kintra* (1749) *Kantraw* (M)

Etymology: G *ceann (m)* + *tràigh* (f)

G **Ceann tràgha*, 'head of the strand' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:119) aptly describes the location of this holding at the southern end of Traigh a'Mhacaire.

Associations:

Baile bhicare, [M]ac[aire Learga]riabhoige, Ciontragha, Grastol,Tocamol, W[g]asgog, D[a ghleann a]stol, Cracobus, Cornubus, Baile Neaghton (1408) *Grawstill and Kintray* (1541a) *Grawstill and Kintray* (1541b) *Grawstill et Kintray* (1614) *Branseik, Kintra, Bodow* (1631) *Keand Tra* (1654) *Groustill et Kintray* (1662) *Gronstill and Kintray* (1665) *Crawstill, Keantra, and Wgistok* (1686) *Kintra & grastill* (1722) *Keantra, Grastell* (1733) *Kentra, Grastill, Tockumill, Machrie* (1741)

Context:

Frachdale [ˈfraːxkˌdɐ̆ɬ], *c.* 1.4km to the SSW, is patently Norse. It was suggested by Maceacharna (1976:80) that the first element in this name might reflect a Norse rendering of G *fraoch*, 'heather'. While this would agree with the local topography, derivation from ON **Frakkadalr* 'Frakki's valley' is perhaps more likely given the slew of other Norse names to the S and E (*cf.* Gillies 1906:228). Although there are no exact cognates for this name, NG lists a Frakkestad and a Frakkegjerd, in Smaalenenes and Stavanger amt respectively, and Jakobsen (1936: 150) a Frakkasetr in Shetland.

Cnoc Mór Ghraisdail lies approx. 1.2km to the SW (see notes on Grasdale above); **Loch Muchairt** *c.* 1km to the SE; and **Loch na Maolaig** *c.* 2.2km to the NE (see notes on Arivoichallum above).

Figure 83: Kintra from Traigh a'Mhachaire

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Lagavulin [ˌlaɡ̊aˈvuːlin]

NR 404 457

Brewseat in Lagmullin (1686) *Lagavullin* (1749) *Lagawillin* (M)

Etymology: G *lag* (m) + *a* (prep) + *muileann* (m)

G **Lag a'Mhuilinn*, 'hollow of the mill' (*cf.* Thomas MS; Gillies 1906:157; Maceacharna 1976:119). As with Ardbeg above, however, this name has only been used of a farm-district since the demise of the previous local centre of Dunyvaig in the early 18th century (see below).

Antiquities:

The remains of the well-defined circular enclosure approx 8.5m in diameter, lie about 250m to the WNW of the distillery. These have been classified by the RCAHMS as a **burial ground** on the basis of the name **Cill Mhoire**, which suggests a dedication to St Mary (NMRS:NR44NW25). It must be wondered, however, if the morphology of this site is not more indicative of a much older hut circle.

Context:

Meall Shurnaig is approx 500m to the W (see notes on Surnaig below); **Texa** is about 1.7km to the WSW (see below). The ruins of **Dunyvaig** castle are about 200m to the SW, across **Lagavulin Bay**.

Dunyvaig [ˌd̥ʌnˈɯːvɪg̊ʲ]

(Shown as a ruin on MacDougall's Map)

NR 405 454

'Dunnie-veig which is a good possession and down of the rent £5,13s.4d. besides [?] parts of ane leurheis' (1722)

Duonowak (1385) *Dennvewag* (1506) *Dunoyik* (1541a) *Dunnoyik/ Dunoyik* (1541b) *Dunnyveyig/ Dunnovaige* (1545) *Dunuvaig* (1549) *Dunnyveig* (1558) *Dunnavaig* (1584) *Dunnavaig* (1599) *Duniveg* (1608) *Dwnyvaig/ Downoyik* (1614) *Dunyvaig* (1615) *Donoyick/ Downyvaig* (1627) *Dunyveg* (1631) *Doun-owaig* (1654) *Donoyick/ castro Dournivaig (Dounivaig)* (1662) *Donozick/ Dunniveig/ Dunniveg* (1665) *Dunyveg* (1686) *Dunniveige, Dunnie-veig* (1722) *Upper Dunuvig/ Nether Dunuvig* (1733) *Upper Dunuvig/ Nether Dunuvig* (1741) [*Dunoyik* (M)]

Etymology: G *dùn* (m) + (ON *út* (adj) + *vík* (f))

Although Watson (1926:307) seemed certain of an original G **Dùn Naomháig*, 'the fort of Naomhág (prev Náemóc): the little saint', this is inconsistent with local pronunciation, as would derivation from *naimheag*, meaning 'little ship' Maceacharna (1976:37-8). While Maceacharna posits an alternative Irish *naomhog*, meaning 'canoe', this word is otherwise unrecorded and therefore, as Maceacharna himself concedes, far from certain.

Given the lack of suitable G alternatives, it is possible that the name Dunyvaig reflects a post-Norse G adaptation of an earlier ON *–vík* compound. Judging from the local pronunciation, this may well have been ON **Útvík*, 'the outer bay' (*cf.* NSL:330). This derivation finds a certain amount of support in the proposed etymology of the nearby farm-district of Surnaig (see below). While Surnaig or **Surnavík* (now known as Lagavulin Bay) is likely to have been considered the (inner) bay in this locality, the remains of Dunyvaig castle sit atop a cliff at the sea-ward extreme of its eastern arm. As this cliff overlooks a smaller and more exposed bay, derivation from *Útvík*, 'the outer bay' would accurately describe the relationship between the two. NR lists numerous examples of 'Utviki' *etc.* in Norway (NR I:654; NR II:697: NR III:573).

Associations:

Dunoyik, Killcallumkill and Largebrak, Iletor, Drumcurrane (1541a) *Ardrudanis, Dunoyik, Kilcallumkill and Largbrak, Iletor, Drumcurran* (1541b) *Dwnyvaig (castle &c)* (1614) *Dunyvaig* (1615) *Downoyik, Kilcalumkill, Largbrak, Iletor, Drumcurrane* (1614) *the other half of Ardtalloch, Ardbrodneis, Donozick, Kilcalumkill and Largobronk* (1665) *Dunyveg and Keanchyllan* (1686) *Myln of Dunyveg* (1686) *Malt Kill of Dunyveg* (1686) Mylne of Dunniveige (1722) *Miln of Dunuvig* (1733) *Upper Dunuvig, miln* (1741)

Antiquities:

While there is thought to have been a fortification on or near this site since Early Historic times (RCAHMS 1984:274), the first clear reference, to a 'castrum Duonowak', is made by John of Fordun in his *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* towards the end of the 14th century (Bl:474). The castle and presumably the lands around it are known to have passed to the MacDonalds of Dunyvaig and the Glens in the early 15th century. Although they subsequently passed from Maclan of Ardnamurchan to the Crown and then to a series of other Crown agents before finally coming into the possession of Sir John Campbell of Cawdor in 1614, the area remained the principal focus for MacDonald resistance and local disaffection until the early 17th century (*cf.* RCAHMS 1984:274-5).

Despite the skirmishes and sieges of the late 16th and early 17th centuries, Dunvaig was earmarked as a potential burghal centre in the 1614 charter by which Sir John Campbell of Cawdor acquired control of the newly created Burgh of Barony of Islay. Perhaps unsurprisingly, however, it was not long before the Campbells decided to re-locate. Hugh Campbell's decision to create a new family seat known as Islay House near Kilarrow in 1677 (RCAHMS 1984:290-6) must be seen in part as an attempt to disrupt the lingering remnants of MacDonald power. It seems likely that the division of the old MacDonald heartlands of Dunyvaig and Largbrecht which accompanied the move was a deliberate part of this policy.

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*Leek Kannockoly

NR 422 474

Leekkannockoly (M)

Etymology: Uncertain

G *leac* (f) + *canoin* (f) + *achadh* (m) 'Stoney place of the Canon's field'?

OR G *leac* (f) + (ON (*kanóki* (m) + *akr* (m)) = 'Stoney place of ***Kanókaakr*** ('The Canon's field')

Eilan Imersay; **Cnoc Rhaonastil**; **Cnoc Crun na Maoil** and **Solam** are all within 1.5km of the probable site of Leekkannockoly (see above).

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*Leorin [ˈløːrɪŋ]

(*Lower) Leorin [ˈløːrɪŋ]

NR 353 485

De duobus Lennyne (1545) *Lynnine* (1558) *Lyring Nether* (1631) *Nather Lyring* (1686) *Nether Lyrine* (1722) *Nether Lewrin* (1733) *Upper and Nether Leurin* (1741) *Loairn (Lower)* (1749) *Lower Lorin* (M)

Etymology: ON *leira* (f) + *á* (f)

Macheacharna's suggestion of ON **leiran*, 'the mud flat' (1976:82) is lexically plausible but topographically improbable. There are no extensive areas of mud in this part of the island, flat or otherwise, nor are their likely to have been in the Viking Age. A more plausible explanation, given the proximity of Leorin River, is the ON **leirá*, 'loamy or mud-banked river' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:157) – perhaps in the definite form **Leiránni* (dative) or **Leirána* (accusative). (*cf.* notes on Claggain above).

According to NSL (202), the river-name 'Leira' meaning the 'river with the clay bed' or 'the silty river' is common in Norway. Jakobsen (1936:228-9) suggests that this same name is preserved in the Shetlandic place-names Leradal and 'de loch o' Leradal.

Associations:

½ Tycarmagan, ½ Tycarmagan, Upper and Nether Leurin, ½ Tyndrom, Balivicar (1741)

Context:

Leorin River flows past the farm buildings from the **Leorin Lochs** *c.* 1.5km to the E, becoming the Kintra river a similar distance to the WNW of the current farm-buildings at Leorin.

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Upper Leorin

NR 360 492

De duobus Lennyne (1545) *Lynnine* (1558) *Over Lyring* (1631) *Over Lyring* (1686) *Over Lyrine* (1722) *Upper Lewrin* (1733) *Upper and Nether Leurin* (1741) *Loairn (Upper)* (1749) *Upper Lorin* (M)

Etymology: ON *leira* (f) + *á* (f)

ON **Leirá*, 'mud-banked or silty river'. See above.

Associations:

Ballenachten moir, Over Lyring and Illand texa (1631) *½ Tycarmagan, ½ Tycarmagan, Upper and Nether Leurin, ½ Tyndrom, Balivicar* (1741)

Context:

Leorin River flows past the farm buildings from the **Leorin Lochs** *c.* 1km to the ESE. **Conas-airigh** [ˈkɔːnəs ˌɛri] is *c.* 750m to the NE and **Carn Chonas-airigh** (247m) *c.* 1.8km to the ENE. Maceacharna (1976:116) is probably correct deriving this last name from G 'gorse sheiling'. However, as the specific-generic word-order here is unusual for G names, it is possible that we are dealing with an ON construct containing the G loan-word *ærgi*, 'shieling'. Analogy with Conisby in Kilchoman parish would allow for a specific of ON *konungr* (m) giving **konungsærgi*, 'the king's sheiling'. It is interesting to note in this respect that the standing stone known as Carragh Bhan lies *c.* 4.5km to the ENE. This particular Carragh Bhan or 'white rock' is traditionally believed to be the tomebstone of the Manx king Godred Crovan.

Figure 84: Carragh Bhan from the S, looking towards Grianan

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Lurabus [ˈʎiɯːrəˌb̥ɯs]

NR 337 435

Lerepols (1541a) *Lerepols* (1541b) *Learabalsay* (1562) *Learabolsay* (1563) *Liaravoss* (1584) *Lerepollis* (1614) *Lerepols* (1627) *Lerebols* (1631) *Lyrebols* (1654) *Lerepollis* (1662) *Lerepolis* (1665) *Lerabollis* (1686) *Lerabols* (1722) *Lyrabolls* (1733) *Lyrabolls* (1733) *Lyrabolls* (1741) *Lyrabus* (1749) *Lurabus* (M)

Etymology: ON *leirr* (m) + *bólstaðr* (m)

As with Lyrabus in Kilarrow parish, this name is routinely derived from ON *leira* + *bólstaðr*, 'Muddy Steading' (Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:85). Strictly speaking, however, the specific here would be descriptive of a 'muddy shore at low water mark'. Given the location of this farm at *c.* 75m OD, a specific of ON *leirr* (m) meaning 'clay soil' might be more approproate (*cf.* Gillies 1906:232; Gammeltoft 2001:135).

Associations:

Changehouse of Lyrabolls (1733) *Lyrabus & Coslybus* (1749)

Antiquities:

The **dun** at **Lurabus** lies about 400m to the ESE (NMRS:NR34SW 8) and **Dùnan Buidhe** at Port Chubaird (NMRS:NR34SW 13) *c.* 600m to the S.

Context:

The farms of **Coilabus** and **Lower Coilabus**, which are likely to have been within the bounds of Ballychatrigan as shown on MacDougall's map, lie approx. 2.2km to the WNW and 1.8km to the W resp (see above).

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Machrie (Hotel) (Tigh a) [ˈvɛxˌərə]

NR 327 491

[M]ac[aire Learga]riabhoige ? (1408) *Macharies* (1722) *Machrie* (1741) *Machry* (1749) *Macharie* (M)

Etymology: G *machair* (f)

Thomas' (MS) etymology of G **Machaire* in the extended sense of 'level ground, sandy plains, links, downs' agrees better with local topography than Gillies' simple 'field, carse' (1906:157 & 17).

Associations:

Baile bhicare, [M]ac[aire Learga]riabhoige, Ciontragha, Grastol,Tocamol, W[g]asgog, D[a ghleann a]stol, Cracobus, Cornubus, Baile Neaghton (1408) *Kentra, Grastill, Tockumill, Machrie* (1741)

Antiquities:

A large hoard of Viking Age silver was discovered on Machrie farm in 1850. While only a small part of the hoard was recovered by the state, this included ninety whole and several fragmentary Anglo-Saxon pennies belonging in the main to the reigns of Ethelstan, Eadmund, Eadred, Eadwig and Eadgar. It is thought to have been deposited between 960 and 970 (NMRS:NR34NW 18). While the presence of these coins does not prove that Islay was a base for 'viking' activity of the type recorded in the Irish an English annals, it does suggest that the locals had strong contacts and lucrative contacts within the 'Vikings' economic sphere of influence (see Chapter 3).

Context:

Loch na Maolaig is approx. 1.2km to the NE; **Loch Muchairt** *c.* 1.65km to the SSW; and **Druim an Stuin** (42m) *c.* 1.5km to the S (see notes on Arivoichallum above).

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Proaig [ˈprɔə̆g̊ʲ]

'Proige is a town very beneficiall for pasturage, good for fatning and nourishing cattle' (1722)

NR 457 576

Proyayg (1506) *Broag* (1507) *Broyag* (1509) *Proak* (1541a) *Proak* (1541b) *Proaig* (1545) *Proaige* (1558) *Proak* (1614) *Proas [vel Proak]* (1627) *Proaig* (1654) *Proas* (1662) *Poras* (1665) *Proag* (1686) *Proaige; Proige* (1722) *Proaig* (1733) *Proaig* (1741) *Proaig* (1749) *Proaig* (M)

Etymology: ON *breiðr* (adj) + *vík* (f)

ON **Breiðvík*, 'broad bay' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:122). While this interpretation clearly fits the local topography,[266] Gillies (1906:157) was concerned that neither the early forms nor pronunciation preserve every phoneme of the hypothetical, normalised ON 'original'. But as we saw in Chapter 6, there is no real reason why they should. Jónsson (1907-15:511) lists 4 examples of Breiðavík in Iceland (VII, XII, XVIII, XX). But of the 16 assumed derivations from ON **breiðavík etc.* listed in NG, almost all survive without the medial /ð(a)/, which seems to have disappeared by the sixteenth century. The resulting Breivik/Brevik is a common farm-name in Norway (NSL:79,80) and the other Norse 'colonial' areas. According to Jakobsen (1936:115), Shetlandic *vík* is most commonly anglicised to *wik* and occassionally abbreviated to

[266] Thomas' (1881-2:272) suggestion of G *frog*, 'a fen, march; pifall, hole, cleft'; or *frogach*, 'fenny, full of holes', fail to accord with the written forms, local pronunciation or topography of the farm-district.

-uk, *-ek* – with from ON **breið-vík* now being realised Brewik. Marwick (1952:66) also lists a Breek (brik), a vanished croft, in Quandal, Orkney. While he is non-committal as to its etymology, this too could conceivably derive from ON *breið* + *vík*. It is probably safe to assume, therefore, that ON *brei(ð)* has been Galicised as 'p/broy' in Islay.

Associations:

Proak, Ballecrauch (1541a) *Proak. Ballecraucht* (1541b) *Proak, Bal'ecrayche* (1614) *Arrevanarie, Poras, Balliecrauch and Cragapols* (1665) *Proaig, Balineil, Arivolhalm* (1741)

Context:

Abhainn Phroaig flows by on the S side of the farm buildings. **Gleann Chòireadail** [ˌg̊laõ:n ˈxo:rə̆ˌdʌ̆ɬ], which lies about 3km to the NNW in the far N of the holding, appears to contain the ON generic *dalr*. While Macheacharna (1976:74) sees the specific as a borrowing from G *coire* (m), 'cauldron' – referring to the shape of the valley – a more straightforward explanation would be to see the name as a whole as ON **Káradalr* 'Kári's Valley', either literally or poetically in the sense of 'the valley of the wind'. The location of this valley, at the southern entrance to the Sound of Islay, is not exactly well sheltered. NR (I:325; II:340) lists numerous dependent place-names in SW and central Norway containing the compound 'Kår(a)dal'.

The exposed quartzite peak of **Bheinn Bheigier** [ˌb̥i ˈmiu:xˌkər] (456m) lies *c.* 2.5km to the SW of Proaig. While this is generally interpreted as the 'vicar's mountain' (*cf.* Maceacharna 1976:112 & 114; see also notes on Ballivicar above), it is tempting to see it as a gaelicisation of an earlier ON **Vik(ar)fjall*, the mountain of the bay – with the *vík* in question being either Proaig or, more probably Claggain Bay (see below). NR (I:678) lists several examples of the mountain name Vikefjell(et) in southern Norway.

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Solam ['so:ɬʌm]

NR 411 482

Solon (1631) *Solame* (1686) *Solame* (1722) *Soalam* (1733) *Soalam* (1733) *Solum* (1741) *Solum* (1741) *Solam* (1749) *Solam* (M)

Etymology: ON *sól* (f) + *heimr* (m)

While Macheacharna (1976:75) suggests derivation from ON **saudiholmr*, meaning 'sheep hill', Gillies (1906:157 & 240) prefers to see the specific as ON *súla* (f), 'gannet', in reference to a nearby colony of sea-birds. Neither are particularly well supported by the early forms or local pronunciation, which point instead to ON **Sólheimr*, 'sunny place', most probably in the dative-locative form **Sólheimi*. The

elevated position of Islay Solam on a S facing hillside results in greater than average exposure to the sun. This kind of laudatory name can also be seen in the nearby hill of **Cnoc an Eireachdais** [ˌkrɔx:k ə ˈñɛrɪxɯɪs] or [ˌkrɔx:k ə ˈñe:raxɪʃ] (184m) G for 'hill of beauty'.

Around 70 Norwegian place-names are thought to derive from ON **Sólheimr*, mostly in the forms Solem or Solum (NSL:290-1; see Hoff 1978 for a discussion of the generic *heimr*). They are particularly common in Fjordane and Trøndelagsfylka (NSL:290-1). A further eleven examples can be found in Iceland, of which one is listed in LNB (Hoff 1978:202). In addition to this, Jakobsen (1936:54) lists a Sulem in Shetland which he considered to be one of the sunniest places in the archipelago.

Associations:

Clagnagaroch, ½ Solum, Largybrecht, Kilcolmkill, Island Texell (1741)

Antiquities:

The **dun** at **Cnoc Crun Na Maoil** [ˌkrɔ:xkˌkru:.nəˈmø:l] lies about 600m to the NE (NMRS:NR44NW 30).

Context:

The summit of **Beinn Sholum** (247m) is approx. 2.25km to the NW. **Loch Sholum** and **Lochan Sholum** can be found on its southern slopes.

Smithil is 1.5km to the ESE (see notes on *Ballynaughton above); and **Loch Uigeadail** [ˌlɔ:x ˈɯ:ɣəˌd̥ǎɬ] 2.2km to the NNW. This last name can be explain G *loch* (m) to a pre-existing ON **Viggjadalr* – with the specific being a river-name. The stream-name Vigg(j)a, 'the bearer or carrier', is found in many places in Norway (NSL:341; NR I:676; NR II:724; NR III:591), with the valley name Vigdal *etc.* also being relatively common, especially in the central part of the country.

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Stremnishmore [ˌstrɛmniʃ ˈmoːr]

NR 311 408

Stromonesmore (1507) *Stromonysmor* (1509) *S[t]romynismoir* (1541a) *Stromynismore* (1541b) *Stromenismoir* (1545) *Stromenismoir* (1558) *Scromynismoir* (1614) *Stromynismoir* (1627) *Stromnis Moir* (1631) *Stromnes M.* (1654) *Strounismoir* (1662) *Stromsmore* (1665) *Stromneis Moir* (1686) *Stommismore* (1722) *Stramnish More* (M)

Etymology: (ON *straumr* (m) + *nes* (n)) + G *mór* (adj)

ON **Straumnes*, 'the headland of the current' with the G contrastive modifier *mór*, meaning 'the larger or more important' (Thomas MS; Maceacharna 1976:123; Gillies 1906:158).

The place-name 'Staumnes' is common in Norway (NSL:301), with NGN listing six examples of the modern reflex Strøm(s)nes. There is a parish of Stromness in Orkney (Marwick 1952:160). While Jakobsen (1936:91) also records a 'stremnes' in Shetland, this is not a farm-name.

Associations:

Stromonesmore in Oo (1507)

Antiquities:

The ruins of **Cill Chomhan chapel**, which cover and area of *c.* 8 3m E-W by c. 5.1m over walls *c.* 1m thick, lie within a subrectangualr enclosure (NMRS:NR34SW4) approx. 500m to the NE. Watson (1926) suggests the dedication might be to St Comgan.

The remains of the promontory fort at **Carraig Bun Aibhne** lie *c.* 500m to the SE (NMRS:NR34SW 11)

Context:

Although the farm buildings are only 450m away from the sea, the closet landing place appears to be **Port Asabus** some 700m to the ENE (see below).

The headland of **Rhubh a'Bhuic** lies approx. 800m to the SSW (see above). **Loch Kinnabus** *c.* 1.4km to the NW (see Kinnabus above); and the well of **Tobar na Bearnaig**

[ˌto.ˌbar nə ˈˌbiaːɾnɪɡʲ] *c.* 400m to the WNW, which could derive form ON **Bjarna(r)vík*, 'Bjarni's bay' or 'the bay of the bear'.

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Strimnishbeg [ˌstrɛmniʃˈˌbihkʲ]

NR 306 407

S[t]romynisbege (1541a) *Stromynisbeg* (1541b) *Fromynsbeg* (1562) *Stromenisbeg* (1563) *Stromenichebeg* (1584) *Scromynisbeg* (1614) *Stromynisbeg* (1627) *Stromnis beg* (1631) *Stromnes beg* (1654) *Stonnisbeg* (1662) *Stronousbeg* (1665) *Stromneis beg* (1686) *Strommisbeg* (1722) *Stromnishbeg* (1733) *Stromnishbeg* (1741) *Stremnishbeg* (1749) *Stramnish Beg* (M)

Etymology: (ON *straumr* (m) + *nes* (n)) + G *beag* (adj)

ON **Straumnes*, 'the headland of the current', with the G contrastive modifier *bheag*, meaning 'lesser or less important' (see Stramnish More above).

Associations:

Killaane, S[t]romynisbege, Cragapolis, Glennastell Ochterach (1541a) *Killaane, Stromynisbeg, Cragapolis, Glenestell Ochterach* (1541b) *Killaane, Scromynisbeg, Gragapols, Glennestell Ochterach* (1614) *Assibolls, Stromnishbeg* (1741)

Context:

Rhubh a'Bhuic is approx. 450m to the SSW (see Claggain above); **Loch Kinnabus** *c.* 1.25km to the NNW (see above); the well of **Tobar na Bearnaig** *c.* 250m to the N; and **Glac Easgamail** *c.* 900m to the WNW (see Stremnishmore above).

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Stuine [ˈstʊ̃ːiŋ]

NR 440 523

Stein (1722) *Stoin* (1722) *Stoin* (1733) *Stoin* (1741) *Stoain* (1749) *Stuine* (M)

Etymology: ON *steinn* (m)

Thomas (MS) suggests G **Staoin*, 'juniper'. Comparison of early forms with 'Staoisha' in Kilmeny, however, points to origins in ON **Steinn* (m), 'stone' (*cf.* Gillies 1906:158).

In Norway, the generic 'Stein', is a relatively common farm-name where it usually points to stoney outcrops, large boulders, standing stones or other stone monuments (NSL:297). NG lists 9 simplex examples including the large farm in Ringerike bykommune known from the *Kings' sagas* as the seat and burial place of Halvdan the Black (NSL:297). In addition to this, Jónsson (1907-15:547) lists one singular (XVI) and three plural simplex (I, IV, IX) examples of Steinn in Iceland; Marwick (1952:51;164;110;70;126) 5 place-names in Orkney containing S. as a specific; and Matras (1933:265-6) various examples of *Steinur(in)* in the Faroes' northern isles. While /sten/ in Shetland's place-names also tends to refer to a 'rock' or a 'large earthfast stone', there are no simplex examples (Jakobsen 1936:102).

Context:

Loch Carn a'Mhaoil/ Allt Loch Carn a'Mhaoil are about 1.3km to the SSW (see notes on Asabus above), **Loch Tallant** about 1.8km to the SSE (see notes on Kildalton above).

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Surnaig [ˈsʰɯːrˌnɪɡ̊ʲ]

NR 399 454

Heyrne (1542) *Heryne* (1545) *Surneg* (1686) *Surnaig* (1722) *Surnage* (1733) *Surnaig* (1741) *Surnaig* (1749) *Surnaig* (M)

Etymology: ON *Surná* (f) + *vík* (f)

The early forms and pronunciation of this name point to derivation from ON **Surná(r)vík*, 'the bay of the river Surn' (*cf.* *Surn in Kilarrow). While the river in question in now known as the Kilbride River and the bay as Lagavulin Bay, these names are secondary to those of farm-districts which do not themselves appear to have a particularly long history (see above and *cf.* Chapters 7 and 8). As such, it is entirely possible that they have replaced earlier Norse names.

The name 'Surn', for example, is borne by several rivers in Norway including the main watercourse between Rindalen and Surn(a)dalen (see notes on *Surn in Kilarrow). It also appears as a element in many Norwegian farm-names, especially in the southwestern parts of the country – *eg.* Surnadal in Møre og Rømsdal, thought to be derived from an earlier **Súrnar-* or **Surnardalr* (NSL:305); and Survik in N-Trøndelag (NSL:306; NG). In addition to this, Marwick (1952:69-70) records a large district on the east side of Rousay in Orkney known as Sourin, noting that the lower part of the Sourin valley, near where the Suso burn enters into the bay, was very wet and boggy and known in early documents as 'Sorweik'. Jakobsen (1936:156) records 'de Surna-meadow' in Shetland which he interprets, following Rygh, as 'a meadow watered by a stream'. Similarly, the Faroese adjective *Súrur*, meaning dampness of ground is found in Súralág and Súratrøð in the Faroes' northern isles (Matras 1933:278). That the previous farm-

centre on Surnaig in Kildalton was both low-lying (< 10m OD) and adjacent to the estuary of Kilbride River suggest that it too may have been 'damp' or 'watered by a stream'.

The previous significance of Surnaig appears to be illustrated by the names **Mòine na Surdaig** and **Loch Mòine na Surdaig** more than 4kn to the NNW. These show that the influence of this apparantly coastal farm-district once stretched far inland, incompassing large tracts of valuable upland grazing and several fresh-water lochs.

Associations:

Heyrne et Largebrak (1542) *Heryne et Largebrak* (1545) *Surnaig, Drumhunst, Bar, and Craegnagouer; Ardinistill* (1722) *Surnage, Barr, and Cragnagore* (1733) *Ardtalla, Surnaig Barr and Cragnagore* (1741)

Antiquities:

The **fort** of **Barr An T'Seann Duine** (NMRS:NR44NW 23) lies approx. 250m to the ESE.

Context:

The low hill of **Meall Shurnaig** [ˌmiaːl ˈhɯːrˌnɪɠʲ] (28m) lies approx. 100m to the S; **Cnoc Creagascail** approx. 1.6km to the NW; and the isle of **Texa** less than 1.5km to the S (see below).

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Texa [ˈtɛkˌsa]

NR 392 438

Insula Helantexa (1385) *Insula de Ilantassane* (1507) *Ylantessane* (1509) *Ellan teggsay* (1549) *Ilantassyne* (1614) *Ilyntassin* (1627) *Illand texa* (1631) *Ilantussin* (1662) *Ilantassin* (1665) *Illandtexar* (1686) *Island Texa* (1722) *Island Texell* (1741) *Isle Texa* (1749) *Island Texa* (M)

Etymology: (?) *Oidech + ON ey (f)

While clearly an ON *ey* (f) or 'island' name, the specific is obscure. The island of Texa has long been identified by with the *Oidecha insula* which Adomnán mentions as a stopping-place on St Cainnech's 6th century voyage from Iona to Ireland (*cf.* Forbes & Skene 1847:47 & 325). While it would seem reasonable to assume as per Thomas (1881-2:250) that the current name of this island resulted from the Norse adaptation of 'Oidech' in the attenuated form **dech* – giving **Dechsey*, all that can be said for certain is that it terminates with the ON generic *ey* (f), 'island', as do a great many of the smaller islands in the Hebrides.

Associations:

Insula de Ilantassane nostre Dominetam in Iley quam in eadem insula (1507) *Insula Sancta Marie de Ylantessane* (1509) *Ballenachten moir, Over Lyring and Illand texa* (1631) *Clagnagaroch, ½ Solum, Largybrecht, Kilcolmkill, Island* Texell (1741)

Antiquities:

The remains of the **chapel** of the Virgin Mary, measuring *c.* 10.4m E-W by 5.7m externally over walls approx. 0.8m thick, lie within an ovoid enclosure (NMRS:NR34SE 2) are approx. 200m to the NNW. While this last feature is thought to typify Early Christain centres, there is no evidence ecclesiatical community of the island prior to the 14th century (RCAHMS (1984:260).

Context:

Meall Shurnaig is about 1.8km to the NNE (see notes on Surnaig above).

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Tighcargaman [ˌtəiːˈkarˌgəmən]

NR 363 495

'Taycarmagan a good pennie woth of a quarter land, being very good for sowing and increases of corn, and a good soil for sheep' (1722)

Tycarmakan (1499) *Carmagane* (1507) *Carmagane* (1509) *Taycarmaygane* (1545) *Taycarmecan* (1558) *Tycarmagan* (1631) *Tycarmagan* (1686) *Taycarmagan* (1722) *Tycarmagan* (1733) *Tycarmagan* 1741) *Taycarmagan* (1749) *Taycormagan* (M)

Etymology: G *tigh* (m) + *Cormagan* (m)

G **Tigh Cargaman*, 'the house of Cargaman'.

Associations:

Glenegadill + *Tycarmakan* (1499) *Glennegadale et in Carmagane* (1507) *terrarium de Glenmygadale et ½ Tycarmagan, ½ Tycarmagan, Upper and Nether Leurin, ½ Tyndrom, Balivicar* (1741)

Antiquities:

In 1838, a **cross-slab** was discovered at **Dòid Mhàiri** (G 'Mary's croft'), *c.* 700m to the WSW, with carving reminiscent of the Ringerike style of Scandinavian art (NMRS:NR34NE 18). Although this is generally taken to imply the very early conversion of Islay's Norse nobility (*cf.* Lamont 1972:20), the assumed dates of this style in Norway would preclude production before the end of the 10th century. Interestingly, this might link the cross to the immediate aftermath of Ólafr Tryggvason's 'official' proselytising of the Norse 'colonies' in the late 990s (see Chapters 7 and 8).

Context:

Borraichill Mór and **Beag** *c.* 700m and 800m to the NNW resp.; **Loch Leòdamais** lies approx 1.15km to the SE (see notes on Ballyneal above); **Imeraval** and **Port Imeraval** are about a kilometre to the WSW; and the beach at **Tràigh Gheighsgeir** *c.* 1.2km to the ESE (see notes on Tighandrom below).

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Tighandrom [ˌtəiːɲˈd̥roːm]

NR 373 461

'Tayendrome a very good pennie-worth of ane auchten part land, being very good for sowing and holding for so much' (1722)

Tydrum (1541a) *Tydrum* (1541b) *Taydrume* (1545) *Tyndenn* (1558) *Tydrum* (1614) *Tymdrum* (1631) *Tydrum* (1627) *Tydrum* (1662) *Tydrum* (1665) *Tymdrom* (1686) *Tayndrome* (1722) *Tayendrome* (1722) *Tyndrom* (1733) *Tyndrom* (1741) *Tayndrome* (1749) *Tayandrum* (M)

Etymology: G *tigh* (m) + *an* (prep) + *druim* (m)

G **Tigh an droma*, 'the house on the ridge'.

Associations:

Bra and Tydrum (1541a) *Bra and Tydrum* (1541b) *Bra and Tydrum* (1614) *Bra et Tydrum* (1627) *Bra et Tydrum* (1662) *Brae and Tydrum* (1665) *Ardinistill, Torodell, ½ Tyndrom* (1741) *½ Tycarmagan, ½ Tycarmagan, Upper and Nether Leurin, ½ Tyndrom, Balivicar* (1741)

Antiquities:

The remains of the **chapel** of **Cill Tobar Lasrach** (NMRS:NR34NE 1) lie several hundred metres to the S. Although the **chapel** of **Cill Tobar Lasrach**, measuring *c.* 9m E-W by *c.* 5.4m over walls approx. 1m thick, can be found in a subcircular enclosure about 300m to the SSE of the site of Tayandrum, it is difficult to tell whether it lay within this or the adjacent holding of Ballyneal.

The **fort** of **Borraichill Mór** (NMRS:NR34NE 11) and the **dun** of **Borraichill Mór** (NMRS:NR34NE 3) are both within a kilometre to the NE. It is difficult to tell whether these fortifications lay within Tayandrum, Taycormagan or the two unidentified holdings to the N (see notes on Kilbride above).

Context:

Loch Leòdamais lies just over 1km to the SE (see notes on Ballyneal above); **Borraichill Mór** and **Beag** just over 500m to the N (see notes on Taycargaman above); **Brahunisary** *c.* 500m to the NE (see notes

on Kilbride above); and **Tràigh Gheighsgeir** [ˌtraiː ˈɣiːʃkɪr] or [ˌtraː ˈɣiːʃkər] *c.* 1.2km to the SE. This last name is a G construct meaning the 'Strand of *Gheighsgeir' and preserving the now lost name for the Port Ellen area (*Gaosker* 1832). While the terminal onomastic unit *Gheighsgeir could derive from either ON *-sker* or G *-sgeir*,[267] compound, referring no doubt to one of the many offshore rocks, the specific-generic order of the elements points more strongly to an ON origin (*cf.* Chapter 6). Considering the danger posed by these rocks to unfamiliar sailors, as highlighted by the rev. Mr Archibald Roberston, Minister of Kildalton in his late 18th century response to Sinclair's *Statistical Account* (Sinclair 1983:400-1), it is not impossible that *Gheghsgeir reflects an earlier ON **Geigsker*, 'dangerous skerry'. There are, however, no known cognates.

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Tokmal [ˈtʰoːhk(ə)ˌmʌ̆ɬ]

'Tocumell a very good penni-worth of land, very good for sowing' (1722)

NR 300 472

Tocamol (1408) *Tocumyll* (1541a) *Tocumyll* (1541b) *Tokomwll* (1562) *Tokomull* (1563) *Toconnill* (1584) *Torwmyll* (1614) *Trowmyll [Tocwmyll]* (1627) *Cocumyll* (1631) *Trowmill* (1662) *Trowmyle* (1665) *Tecumel* (1686) *Tocumel* (1722) *Tockmiln* (1733) *Tockumill, Machrie* (1741) *Tokamall* (1749) *Tokamale* (M)

Etymology: ON *Haukr* (m) + *múli* (m)

The specific here appears to be ON *haukr*, 'hawk' – as either a male personal name or type of bird (*cf.* Gillies 1906:158; Maceacharna 1976:80). The initial /t/ which is common to all recorded froms can be seen as a reflex of the G grammar sytem (*cf.* Chapter 6). Previous explanations of the generic including Maceacharna's (1976:80) ON *holmr* (m) and Gillies' (1906:158) ON *fjall* (n) are consistent with neither the inland and relatively dry location of this holding[268] or local pronunciation. Given the marked ridge to the south of the abandoned township (RCAHMS 1984:315-7), this seems more likely to have been ON *múli* (m) 'ridge, projection' giving ON **Haukamúli*, 'the ridge of (the) Hawk(s)'. While there are no exact cognates in Norway or elsewhere, NG does list over 200 farm-names beginning with 'Hauk'.

Associations:

Baile bhicare, [M]ac[aire Learga]riabhoige, Ciontragha, Grastol, Tocamol, W[g]asgog, D[a ghleann a]stol, Cracobus, Cornubus, Baile Neaghton (1408) *Tokomwll and Tornobelsay* (1562) *Tokomull and Tornobolsay* (1563) *Toconnill and Tornobolse* (1584) *Cocumyll and Vgiskock* (1631) *Kentra, Grastill, Tockumill, Machrie* (1741)

[267] as a borrowing from ON *sker* – *cf.* Stewart (2004:413)
[268] *cf.* notes on Glen Osamail under Kilchoman, in Kilchoman parish above

Antiquities:

The remains of a medieval **chapel**, measuring *c.* 8.1m E-W by *c.* 5.7m externally over walls with an average thickness of 1.25m (NMRS:NR24NE 1) lie approx. 100m to the NW of the ruins of the township.

Context:

Tokamale is surrounded on the NE, E and SE sides by **Grastell. Cnoc Mór Ghrasdail** lies *c.* 800m to the WNW and **Maol Ghrasdal** *c.* 1.75km to the SSE (see notes on Grasdale above) and **Frachdale** is *c.* 1.5km to the ESE (see notes on Kintra above).

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Torradale ['tɔra.d̥ǎɬ]

NR 380 461

'Toradill a very good quarter land, alike good for sowing and milk, lying upon the shore, and a shielding in the muir' (1722)

Torodill (1541a) *Torodill* (1541b) *Torrasdull* (1545) *Torrodod* (1558) *Torrodale* (1665) *Torrodill* (1614) *Torrodill* (1627) *Torodol* (1631) *Torrodill* (1662) *Toredoll* (1686) *Toradill* (1722) *Torodale* (1733) *Torodell* (1741) *Torradale* (1749) *Toradale* (M)

Etymology: ON ?*torfa* (f) + *dalr* (m)

While the generic here is clearly ON *dalr* (m), 'valley', the specific is not so easy to ascertain. The range of possibilities is similar to those presented for Aird Thòrr-innis (see Smaull in Kilchoman) and Rhubha Thòrrnish (see notes on Ardilistry above).

Associations:

Torrasdull et Balleneyle (1545) *Torrodod et Balleneill* (1558) *Ardinistill, Torodell, ½ Tyndrom* (1741)

Antiquities:

The **fort** of **Portintruan** (NMRS:NR34NE 27) lies aprox. 850m to the SSE; and the (possible) **dun** of **Sruthan na Cille** (RCAHMS 1984:122) just over 500m to the WSW.

The ovoid enclosure of **Cnoc na Cille** about 200m to the NW of Torradale (and 240m to the SE of the farmhouse at Brahunisary) has been classified as a **burial ground** by the RCAHMS (1984:168). In 1988 an early Christian cross slab was found just outside the enclosure wall by the farmer Hector Maclean. The carving is similar to that found at Kilbride (NMRS:NR34NE 4).

Context:

Smithil/Abhainn Smithil about 1.7km to the ENE (see notes on *Ballynaughton above); **Borrachill Mór** (156m) and **Borrachill Beag** within 1.3km to the NW (see notes on Taycargaman above); and the farm buildings at **Brahunisary** about 450m to the NW (see notes on Kilbride above).

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Trudernish [ˈtruːdə̥rˌniʃ]

'Trudernish, exceeding compact and convenient, with mure and dale' (1722)

NR 462 525

Ardrudenis (1541a) *Ardrudanis* (1541b) *Truddirnes* (1545) *Truddirnes* (1558) *Ardrudenis* (1614) *Ar[d]-brudenis* (1627) *Ardbrudenis* (1662) *Ardbrodneis* (1665) *Trudernis* (1686) *Trudernish* (1722) *Trudernish* (1733) *Trudernish* (1741) *Trudernish* (1749) *Trudernish* (M)

Etymology: ON *þróndr* (m) + *nes* (n)

While the generic here is clearly ON *nes* (n), 'headland', the specific demands closer scrutiny. If it is taken as the ON *þróndr* (m) suggested by Thomas (MS), interpretations of 'the headland of the (castrated) wild boar' refering to the shape of the promontory; 'the headland of the people of/ from Þróndheim' (*cf.* Trotternish in Skye (Forbes 1923:434-5) – the G form of which is Trondairnis (Dwelly:1029)); or simply 'Þránd's headland' (NID:1218-21) are all possible. It should be noted, however, that while the generic *nes* is extremely common in Norwegian farm-names, the few cases where it is combined with personal names are usually restricted to younger names of the Christain type such as Mari and Thomas (NSL:231).

NG lists one herred (larger administrative unit) and five farm-names in Norway thought to derive from ON **Þróndarnes*. The specific is also very common in mountain names where it has evolved into Tron (NSL:322). In the context of headlands, however, it seems to have acquired a meaning of *høit*, 'a strongly jutting, pointy promontory' (NSL:322). As can be seen from Figure 85, this aptly describes the topography of Trudernish in Islay.

Associations:

Ardrudanis, Dunoyik, Kilcallumkill and Largbrak, Iletor, Drumcurran (1541b) *the other half of Ardtalloch, Ardbrodneis, Donozick, Kilcalumkill and Largobronk* (1665) *Clagincarrach and Trudernis* (1686) *Craigfin, Trudernish* (1741)

Figure 85: Trudernish Point from the NNW

Antiquities:

The remains of the **chapel** of **Cill a'Chuibein** (NMRS:NR45SE 1) are *c.* 800m to the WNW. A large outline Latin cross discovered here in 1975 is thought to date to the early Christian period (RCAHMS 1984:263; NMRS: NR45SE 19).

The promontory **fort** of **Dùn Thrudernish** lies approx. 950m to the SSE (NMRS:NR45SE 10) on **Thrudernish Point**; and the dun of **Dun Cill A Chuibein** approx. 650m to the WNW (NMRS:NR45SE7)

Context:

The shingle beach of **Bàgh Rubh' a'Bhuic** lies just after **Rubh' a'Bhuic** some 450m to the NNE (see notes on Claggain above). **Aros Bay**, which is lined by **Tràigh Arois**, is about 450m to the ENE, is spacious, sheltered and offers good anchorage (Haswell-Smith 1999:42). While there is a possibility that this name is derived from G **An ros*, 'house/palace', local topography clearly favours ON *Áross*, 'mouth of the (Kintour) river'. There are several farms and urban areas that bear this name, in the form Åros, in Norway and elsewhere in Scandinavia (NSL:358).

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APPENDIX II: EXTRA-LINGUISTIC DATA

Figure 86: Key to soil association codes

From: Soil Survey of Scotland: Islay – Sheet 60: 1:50 000 Provisional Map. The Macaulay Institute for Soil Research, Aberdeen, 1984.

Map Unit	Association	Parent Material	Component Soils	Landforms	Vegetation
1A	Alluvial Soils	Recent rivcrine and lacustrine alluvial deposits	Mineral alluvial soils	Flood plains, river terraces and former lake beds	Arable and permanent pastures. Rush pastures, sedge mires and swamp communities.
3	Organic Soils	Organic deposits	Basin and valley peats	Basins and valleys	Blanket and flying bent bog. Swamp, sedge mires and rush pastures
97	(Corby/ Boyndie/ Dinnet)	Fluvioglacial and raised beach sands and gravels derived from acid rocks	Humus-iron podzols: some gleys	Undulating lowlands, mounds and terraces with gentle slopes	Arable and permanent pastures. Acid bent-fescue grassland. Rush pastures and sedge mires
97T	(Boyndie)	Fluvioglacial and raised beach sands derived from acid rocks	Humus-iron podzols: some gleys	Undulating lowlands, mounds and terraces with gentle slopes	Arable and permanent pastures. Acid bent-fescue grassland. Rush pastures and sedge mires
99	(Corby/ Boyndie/ Dinnet)	Fluvioglacial and raised beach sands and gravels derived from acid rocks	Humus-iron podzols; some humic gleys and alluvial soils	Valley floors and lowland with gentle slopes	Arable and permanent pastures. Acid bent-fescue grassland. Rush pastures and sedge mires
99T	(Boyndie)	Fluvioglacial and raised beach sands derived from acid rocks	Humus-iron podzols some humic gleys and alluvial soils	Valley floors and lowland with gentle slopes	Arable and permanent pastures. Acid bent-fescue grassland. Rush pastures and sedge mires
103	(Boyndie)	Fluvioglacial and raised beach sands derived from acid rocks	Humus-iron podzols, peaty gleys, some humic gleys, alluvial soils and peat	Terraces with gentle slopes: slightly rocky	Arable and permanent pastures. Rush pastures and sedge mires. Atlantic heather moor
105	(Boyndie)	Fluvioglacial and raised beach sands derived from acid rocks	Peaty gleys, peaty podzols, some peat	Terraces with gentle slopes: non-rocky	Arable and permanent pastures. Atlantic and bog heather moor. Rush pasture. Blanket bog
158	(Drleith/ Kirktonmoor)	Drifts derived from basaltic rocks	Brown forest soils: some brown rankers	Strongly terraced lowland with gentle and strong slopes: slightly rocky	Arable and permanent pastures. Bent-fescue grassland. Herb rich Atlantic heather moor
165	(Deecastle)	Drift derived from Dalriadic limestones and calc-silicate rocks	Brown forest soils: some brown rankers and noncalcareous gleys	Undulating lowlands and hills with gentle and strong slopes. Slightly rocky to rocky	Arable and permanent pastures. Rock-rose - fescue grassland. Herb rich Atlantic heather moor
181	(Durnhill)	Drifts derived from quartzites and quartzoze grits	Noncalcareous gleys, peaty gleys, some humic gleys and peat	Undulating lowlands and hills with gentle and strong slopes. Non-rocky	Permanent pastures. Bog heather moor and blanket bog. Rush pastures and sedge mires
184	(Durnhill)	Drifts derived from quartzites and quartzoze grits	Peaty gleys, peat	Hills sides with gentle and strong slopes: non-rocky	Flying bent grassland. Dry and moist Atlantic heather moor. Bog heather moor
187	(Durnhill)	Drifts derived from quartzites and quartzoze grits	Peaty podzols, rankers: some peat	Hills and valley sides with strong to very steep slopes: moderately rocky with scree	Dry and moist Boreal heather moor. Blaeberry heath. Blanket and upland blanket bog
190	(Durnhill)	Drifts derived from quartzites and quartzoze grits	Peaty gleys, peaty rankers, some peat and peaty podzols	Rugged hills with gentle and strong slopes: very rocky	Flying bent grassland. Moist Atlantic and bog heather moor. Blanket and flying bent bog
241	(Foudland)	Drifts derived from slates, phyllites and other weakly metamorphosed argillaceous rocks	Noncalcareous gleys, humic gleys, some peaty gleys and peat	Undulating lowland with gentle to moderate slopes: non rocky	Arable and permanent pasture. Sharp-flowered rush pasture. Moist Atlantic heather moor
242	(Foudland)	Drifts derived from slates, phyllites and other weakly metamorphosed argillaceous rocks	Noncalcareous gleys, humic gleys: some gleyed rankers and brown forest soils	Ridged lowland with gentle and strong slopes: moderately rocky	Arable and permanent pasture. Sharp-flowered rush pasture. Acid bent-fescue grassland
242V	(Foudland)	Drifts derived from slates, phyllites and other weakly metamorphosed argillaceous rocks	Noncalcareous gleys, humic gleys: some gleyed rankers and brown forest soils	Ridged lowland with gentle and strong slopes: very rocky	Arable and permanent pasture. Sharp-flowered rush pasture. Acid bent-fescue grassland

Map Unit	Association	Parent Material	Component Soils	Landforms	Vegetation
242Y	(Foudland)	Drifts derived from slates, phyllites and other weakly metamorphosed argillaceous rocks	Noncalcareous gleys, humic gleys: some gleyed rankers and brown forest soils	Ridged lowland with gentle and strong slopes: slightly rocky	Arable and permanent pasture. Sharp-flowered rush pasture. Acid bent-fescue grassland
250	(Foudland)	Drifts derived from slates, phyllites and other weakly metamorphosed argillaceous rocks	Humus-iron podzols, brown forest soils: some humic gleys and peaty podzols	Hill and valley sides with strong to very steep slopes: moderately rocky	Acid bent-fescue grassland. Rush pastures and sedge mires. Hazel, oak and birchwood
253	(Foudland)	Drifts derived from slates, phyllites and other weakly metamorphosed argillaceous rocks	Peaty gleys, peaty podzols: some peat and rankers	Hills with gentle to steep slopes: slightly rocky	Atlantic and bog heather moor. Heath-rush – fescue grassland. Blanket and flying bent bog
308	(Inchkenneth)	Drifts derived from Mesozoic sandstones, shales and limestones	Humic gleys, noncalcareous gleys	Undulating lowlands and foothills with gentle and strong slopes: non rocky	Arable and permanent pastures. Rush pastures, sedge mires
308 W	(Inchkenneth)	Water-modified till derived from Mesozoic sandstones, shales and limestones	Humic gleys, noncalcareous gleys: some brown forest soils with gleying	Undulating lowlands and foothills with gentle and strong slopes: non rocky	Arable and permanent pastures. Rush pastures, sedge mires
309	(Inchkenneth)	Drifts derived from Mesozoic sandstones, shales and limestones	Humic gleys, noncalcareous gleys	Undulating lowlands and foothills with gentle to steep slopes: moderately rocky	Arable and permanent pastures. Rush pastures, sedge mires
311	(Inchkenneth)	Drifts derived from Mesozoic sandstones, shales and limestones	Peaty gleys, humic gleys: some peat	Undulating foothills with gentle to steep slopes: moderately rocky	Heath-rush – fescue grassland. Rush pastures and sedge mires. Bog heather moor and blanket bog
333	(Kintyre)	Drifts derived from Dalriadan schists and red sandstones, often water modified	Noncalcareous gleys, humic gleys: some brown forest soils and peaty gleys	Undulating lowlands with gentle slopes: non-rocky	Arable and permanent pastures. Rush pastures, sedge mires
333 W	(Kintyre)	Water-modified till derived from Dalriadan schists and red sandstones	Noncalcareous gleys, humic gleys: some brown forest soils and peaty gleys	Undulating lowlands with gentle slopes: non-rocky	Arable and permanent pastures. Rush pastures, sedge mires
334	(Kintyre)	Drifts derived from Dalriadan schists and red sandstones, often water modified	Peaty gleys: some peat	Undulating foothills with gentle slopes: non-rocky	Flying bent grassland and bog. Heath grass – white bent grassland. Rush pastures
335	(Kintyre)	Drifts derived from Dalriadan schists and red sandstones, often water modified	Noncalcareous gleys, humic gleys: some brown forest soils and peaty gleys	Undulating lowlands with gentle slopes: slightly rocky	Arable and permanent pastures. Rush pastures, sedge mires
336	(Kintyre)	Drifts derived from Dalriadan schists and red sandstones, often water modified	Peaty gleys: some peat	Undulating foothills with gentle slopes: slightly rocky	Flying bent grassland and bog. Heath grass – white bent grassland. Rush pastures
381	(Links)	Windblown sands. Humus-iron podzols	Humus-iron podzols, humic gleys: some peat and alluvial soils	Stabilised dunes and undulating raised beaches	Arable and permanent pastures. Bent-fescue grassland. Rush pastures and sedge mires
389	(Lochinver)	Drifts derived from Lewisian gneisses	Brown forest soils, humus-iron podzols: some rankers and gleys	Valley sides with steep and very steep slopes: moderately and very rocky	Bent-fescue grassland. Herb-rich Atlantic heather moor. Hazel and birchwood

Map Unit	Association	Parent Material	Component Soils	Landforms	Vegetation
394	(Lochinver)	Drifts derived from Lewisian gneisses	Peaty gleys, peat: some peaty podzols and peaty rankers	Dissected lowlands and hills with gentle and strong slopes: moderately rocky	Moist Atlantic and bog heather moor. Heath-rush – fescue grassland. Blanket bog
552	(Torridon)	Noncalcareous gleys, humic gleys: some peaty gleys	Noncalcareous gleys, humic gleys: some peaty gleys	Gentle, undulating lowlands: slightly rocky	Arable and permanent pastures. Rush pastures and sedge mires

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Kildaltan	Killarrow	Kilmeny	Kilchoman
1A	1A	3	99
97T	97	105	99T
99	97T	165	103
158	99	181	103
165	105	184	308
241	165	187	308W
242	242Y	190	309
242V	253	242Y	311
250	333	253	389
333	333W		394
334	334		552
335	336		
381	552		

Figure 87: Distribution of soil aassociation types by parish

From: Soil Survey of Scotland: Islay – Sheet 60: 1:50 000 Provisional Map. The Macaulay Institute for Soil Research, Aberdeen, 1984.

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Figure 88: Key to drift and solid geology codes

From: British Geological Survey: Solid and Drift Edition – South Islay: Scotland Sheet 19; North Islay: Scotland Sheet 27 – 1:50,000 Provisional Series (National Environmental Research Council). The Edinburgh Press Ltd., Edinburgh: 1998

1. **caLL, ZL** Undifferentiated limestone and shale with limestone conglomerate and calcareous sandstone (ZL)
2. **caLLK** Lossit Limestone Formation: Keills Limestone Member: limestone, pure blue, with shale partings, Oolitic, stromatolitic and conglomeratic at top
3. **caLSK** Ballygrant Formation: Storakaig Limestone Member: limestone, pure, blue-grey, massive, bedded
4. **caSPE** Port Ellen Calcareous Flags Member: phyllite with interbedded quartzite and limestone
5. **D** Amphibolite, hornblende schist, metadolerite and metagabbro (Meta igneous rocks)
6. **E, S** Rhinns Complex: Gneissose, syenite, medium- to coarse-grained (S), cut by coarse-grained metagabbro
7. **KLP** Lossit Limestone Formation: Persabus Member: Interbedded quartzite, sandstone, dolostone, dolomitic siltstone, black pelitic slate and green chloritic slate
8. **L** Caledonian Igneous Suite: Lamprophyre (Intrusive Igneous rocks)
9. **SB, LB** Ballygrant Formation: Barradail Phyllite Member: slate and pyllite, graphitic, micaceous and chloritic with thin limestone (LB) and psammite
10. **LBD** Bonahaven Dlomite Formation: Margadale Member: dolostone, ferruginous, variably psammatic and politic including stromatolitic horizons
11. **LDK** Kintra Dolostone Formation: Dolostone, blue, dark, impure, interbedded with dark pelitic slate
12. **LL** Lossit Limestone formation: Limestone, massive, blue-grey, containing oolites and stromatolites, with quartzite, siltstone and black pelitic slate
13. **QLP, LLP** Laphroaig Quartzite Formation: Quartzite, micaceous in places, becoming phyllitic towards top and passing up into a thin limestone bed locally
14. **LLV** Lossit Limestone Formation: Kilslevan Limestone Member: limestone, massive, blue-grey, interbedded with pelitic slate at base
15. **PMD LMB** Mullach Dubh Phyllite Formation: Phyllite, black, pelitic, with thin sandstones and siltstones and limestones (LMD)
16. **OD** Olivine dolerite (Intrusive Igneous Rocks)
17. **PBSC** Scarba Conglomerate Formation: Jura Slate Member: slate, grey, pelitic
18. **PE** Glen Egedale Slate Formation: Phyllite, green, chloritic and black, pellitic slate
19. **PKP** Kilchoman Phyllite Formation: Phyllite, grey and pyrite bearing with thin calcareous silty layers
20. **PMD** Mulindry Bridge Slate Formation: Pyritiferous black pelitic slate
21. **PQAN** Ardnvae Phyllite and Greywacke Formation: Phyllite and laminated grey, greywacke. Thin (1cm) calcareous layers
22. **PSP** Sanaigmore Phyllite Formation: Dark grey phyllite with locally developedthin calcareous siltstone layers
23. **QA3** Port Askaig Tillite Formation: Creagan Loisgte Member: quartzie, diamictite, dolostone and conglomerate
24. **QBR** Blackrock Grit Formation: Subarkose, mostly pale greenish-grey, coarse-grained, with intercalated silstones and mudstones and rare interformational breccia
25. **QCJ** Colonsay Group: Mostly meta-arkose (Metamorphic: Metasedimentary Rocks)
26. **QCL** Colonsay Group: Phyllite, metagreywacke and meta-arkose (Metamorphic: Metasedimentary Rocks)
27. **QGSM** Smaull Greywacke Formation: Greywacke, very coarse-grained (pebbles up to 1cm across). Abundant matrix (c.30%) composed mostly of chlorite and sericite
28. **QLA** Laggan Sandstone Formation: Subarkose, pale grey to pale brown, mostly fine grained, with intercalated siltstone and mudstone. Rare thin beds of coarse-grained subarkose and interformational mudstone breccia
29. **QMB** Bowmore Sandstone Group: Mostly arkose with intercalated siltstone and mudstone (Metamorphic: Metasedimentary Rocks)
30. **QOF** Octofad Sandstone Formation: Arkose, grey-green
31. **QPCG** Colonsay Group: Phyllite metagreywacke and meta-arkose (Metamorphic: Metasedimentary Rocks)
32. **QPRG** Rhudha Gaidhealach Formation: Arkose, coarse-grained, grey-green, with cream weathering, fining upwards to interbedded, striped, grey mudstone and fine to medium grained sandstone
33. **QQA5** Port Askaig Tillite Formation: Com Com Member: mixed diamictite conglomeritic quartzite (ZA5) passing laterally into quartzite with thin diamictites (QQA5)
34. **QQD** Cnoc Donn Quartzite Formation: Quartzite, white, coarse-grained, with abundant cross bedding. Conglomerate locally developed
35. **QQJ** Jura Quartzite Formation: Quartzite, massive, pebbly
36. **QZSC** Scarba Conglomerate Formation: conglomerate with pebbles, cobbles and boulders of quartzite, graphitic pelite, phyllite and dolostone. Interbedded with greyish red dolomitic pelite.
37. **SCG** Colonsay Group: Mostly metasiltstone (Metamorphic: Metasedimentary Rocks)
38. **SPE** Port Ellen Formation: Port Ellen Phyllite Member: phyllite with interlaminated quartzite and limestone
39. **ZA** Islay Sub-group: Diamictites and sandstones, many dolomitic
40. **ZA4** Port Askaig Tillite Formation Rhubha-phort Beag Member: diamictite (dominantly granitic clasts), with subordinate quartzite and dolomitic sandstone
41. **ZAC** Ardmore Formation: Ardmore Conglomerate Member: conglomerate with clasts of quartzite, phyllite and dolostone
42. **ZQA** Port Askaig Tilite Formation: Diamictite, quartzite, dolomite and conglomerate with some phyllite and pelite

Kilchoman	Killarrow	Kilmeny	Kildalton
D	caLL	caLL	caLSK
E	caLSK	caLLK	caSPE
L	D	LB	D
OD	LB	LBD	LDK
PKP	LDK	LLV	LLP
PQAN	LL	LMB	OD
PSP	OD	OD	PBSC
QBR	PE	PMD	PE
QCJ	PMD	QQA3/5	PMD
QCL	QBR	QQJ	QLP
QGSM	QLA	SB	QQJ
QOF	QMB	ZA	QZSC
QPCG	QQD	ZA4	LL
QPRG	QQJ		SPE
S	SB		ZAC
SCG	ZA		
	ZL		
	ZQA		

Figure 89: Distribution of geological types by parish

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Figure 90: Farm-districts on MacDougall's 'Map of the Island of Islay' 1749-51

Modern Name	(Port Charlotte)	Almond	Arihalloch	Ardnave	Ballimony	Ballinaby
Name 1749-51	Glassans	Almond	Archalloch	Ardneave	Ballymeny	Ballynaby
Generic	ON *staðir* (m. pl.)	ON *á(r)mót* (n)	G *àirigh* (f)	G *àird* (f)	G *baile* (m)	G *baile* (m)
Parish	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman
OS NGR	NR240570	NR222554	NR190556	NR283713	NR195550	NR221670
Altitude (m)	20	65	80	25	80	25
Coastal?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	0.10	0.80	1.28	0.50	1.90	1.20
Direction to Sea	SE	ESE	WNW	NW	WNW	W
Landing Place Quality	3	2	2	3	2	2
Soil Associations	99	311	394	99T	389	99T/552
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	2	2	1	1	1
Solid/ Drift Geology	QOP	E/ S	S	PQAN	S	QGSM/ PSP
Simplified Geology	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER	MIX	OTHER	MIX
Land Quality	5	3	3	6	5	6
Extent in 1507	33s 4d	33s 4d (Ambud et Archallauch)	33s 4d (Ambud et Archallauch)	£3 6s 8d [Church]	(Balledale = 33s 4d)	33s 4d (leich et Ballenabe: 1509 Balenabe £3 6s 8d)
Extent in 1541	2 1/2 M	16s 8d (16s 8d)	16s 8d (16s 8d)		2 1/2 M	2 M 10s
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722	1 Q	1 A	3 L	1 Q 2 C (with island)	2 Q (with W El & Ansc)	2 Q
Change?			Increase			Increase
Size of Change?			0.25			1
IAFs	dun			dun		
Viking Antiquities						5 Viking burials
MCM	chapel					
OTR	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N
Relative Size	4	2	2	4	4	4
Relative Favourability	4	3	2	4	3	4

Modern Name	Brade	Breakachey	Carn	Cladville	Conisby	Corsapol
Name 1749-51	Brade	Breakachey	Carn	Gladivoll	Conisby	Corsapool
Generic	G *bràighe* (m)	G *achadh* (m)	G *càrn* (m)	ON *fjall* (n)	ON *býr* (m)	ON *pollr* (m)
Parish	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman
OS NGR	NR207604	NR275725	NR245572	NR178541	NR262618	NR299665
Altitude (m)	20	20	20	50	43	20
Coastal?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Distance to Sea (km)	0.60	0.80	0.10	0.90	0.55	3.35
Direction to Sea	WSW	WNW	SE	NNW	SE	SSW
Landing Place Quality	3	3	2	2	3	0
Soil Associations	308	99T	99/308	308	308	552
Simplified Soil Assoc.	2	1	1	2	2	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	L/ E/ S (QPRG)	PQAN	S	E/ S	QCJ/ S	QBR
Simplified Geology	OTHER	MIX	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER
Land Quality	3	6	5	3	3	3
Extent in 1507	33s 4d (Crossbarrich, Salligo and Brakilkeranc)	33s 4d [Church]		33s 4d	33s 4d (also Cantra = 33s 4d)	33s 4d
Extent in 1541	25s		16s 8d	50s	2 1/2 M (Kintraw = 2 1/2M)	2 1/2 M
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722	3 L	1 Q	(Carneglassans 1A)	4 Q 1 L (Shind, Cuill Masher, Forl, Cladeveill)	1 Q	3 Q 1 A (Leack Sannaigb, Grannard & Caspellen)
Change?					Decrease	
Size of Change?					-1	
IAFs		see Killneave		dun	dun	
Viking Antiquities						
MCM		see Killneave	chapel	chapel	chapel	chapel/ high cross?
OTR	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Relative Size	3	4	2	4	4	4
Relative Favourability	3	4	4	2	3	2

Modern Name	Coulabus	Coull	Coultorsay	Craigfad	Cultoon	Ellister (Easter)
Name 1749-51	Culabolls	Coole	Cultorsa	Craigfad	Cultuin	Elister (Easter)
Generic	ON *bólstaðr* (m)	ON *kúla* (f)	ON *kúla* (f)/ *staðir* (m.pl)	*creag* (f)	ON *tún* (n)	ON *staðir* (m. pl.)
Parish	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman
OS NGR	NR298658	NR200646	NR258604	NR229558	NR200572	NR202535
Altitude (m)	20	30	30	20	115	40
Coastal?	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	2.65	0.80	0.30	0.15	2.60	0.45
Direction to Sea	SSW	S	SE	SE	WSW N	SE
Landing Place Quality	3	2	3	1	0	2
Soil Associations	552	99	99/308W	309	309	308
Simplified Soil Assoc.	2	1	1	2	2	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	QBR	QCL/ PKP	QOF/ E/ S	E/ S	S	S/ E
Simplified Geology	OTHER	MIX	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER
Land Quality	3	6	5	3	3	3
Extent in 1507	33s 4d (with Lirepollis)	33s 4d	33s 4d (Lorgba et Coule)		33s 4d (et Calmazary)	
Extent in 1541		2 1/2 M	16s 4d (16s 4d)		16s 8d (16s 8d)	2 1/2 M
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722		4 Q 1 L (Shind, Cuill Masherv, Forl, Cladeveill)	3 Q 1 L 1 C (Octm, Cult, Lorgb, Grim, Dudlm, Gay)	1 A	1 Q	1 Q
Change?						Increase
Size of Change?						1
IAFs		fort			dun	see Wester Elister
Viking Antiquities						
MCM						see Wester Elister
OTR	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Relative Size	2	4	2	2	2	4
Relative Favourability	3	4	4	2	2	3

Modern Name	Ellister (Wester)	Foreland (House)	Gartacharra	Gearach	Grimsay	Gruinart Farm
Name 1749-51	Elister (Wester)	Foreland	Gorlacher	Garrich	Greamsa	Grunart
Generic	ON *staðir* (m. pl.)	ON *land* (n)	G *gort* (m)	UNCERTAIN	ON *staðir* (m. pl.)	ON *fjörðr* (m)
Parish	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman
OS NGR	NR188522	NR269643	NR250613	NR223593	NR226605	NR278682
Altitude (m)	15	30	55	80	80	15
Coastal?	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
Distance to Sea (km)	0.10	1.40	1.15	2.30	2.50	4.25
Direction to Sea	S	SE	ESE	WSW	WSW	NNE NW
Landing Place Quality	3	3	3	3	3	1
Soil Associations	99/308	308W	308W	309	389	99
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	2	2	2	1	1
Solid/ Drift Geology	S/ E/ QOF	PKP/ QPCG	QCJ/ S	S	E/ S/ D	QPCG
Simplified Geology	OTHER	MIX	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER
Land Quality	5	4	3	3	5	5
Extent in 1507	33s 4d (Ilastill)	33s 4d (Camkillane et Forland)	33s 4d (et Carnglas)	33s 4d (with Ochtmoir)	33s 4d	8s 4d [Church] also Grumwurd 25s
Extent in 1541	2 1/2 M	16s 8d (16s 8d)	16s 8d	2 1/2 M	16s 8d	25s
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722	2 Q (with Ballegallie & Anscallaige)	4 Q 1 L (Shind, Cuill Masher, Forl, Cladeveill)		1 Q	3 Q 1 L 1 C (Octm, Cult, Lorgb, Grim, Dudlm, Gayl)	3 Q 1 A (Leack Sannaigb, Grannard & Caspellen)
Change?				Increase	Decrease	
Size of Change?				0.5	-0.5	
IAFs	fort		dun		dun/ dun/ dun	fortified island
Viking Antiquities						
MCM	chapel		chapel			chapel
OTR	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Relative Size	4	2	2	2	4	4
Relative Favourability	4	3	3	3	4	3

Modern Name	Grulinmore	Kelsay	Kilchiaran	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilnave
Name 1749-51	Grulint	Kelsa	Killerin (and Brade)	Killchoman (East)	Killchoman (West)	Killneave
Generic	ON *land* (n)	ON *staðir* (m. pl.)	G *cill* (f)	G *cill* (f)	G *cill* (f)	G *cill* (f)
Parish	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman
OS NGR	NR241681	NR192560	NR207603	NR216633	NR216632	NR283731
Altitude (m)	30	78	20	40	40	25
Coastal?	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	2.75	1.45	0.60	1.10	1.10	2.20
Direction to Sea	N	W	WSW	SW	SW	E NNW
Landing Place Quality	3	2	3	2	2	1
Soil Associations	552	308	308	99	99	99/552
Simplified Soil Assoc.	2	2	2	1	1	1
Solid/ Drift Geology	QPCG	S	L/ E/ S (QPRG)	SCG	SCG	QGSG/ PQAN
Simplified Geology	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER	MIX
Land Quality	3	3	3	5	5	6
Extent in 1507		33s 4d (Kelsa et Kintesane)	8s 4d [Ch] (with Kilcom.) also 33s 4d/ 33s 4d/ 33s 4d	see Killchoman (West)	Kilc & Kilk 8s 4d [Churc] aslo £6 13s 4d	[WITH ARDNAVE?]
Extent in 1541		2 1/2 M (with Kilcavane)	2 1/2 M (Kilc:moir)16s 8d (Kilc:beg)	see Killchoman (West)	10M	
Extent in 1562				see Killchoman (West)		
Extent in 1722	3 Q 1 L 1 C (Octm, Cult, Lorgb, Grim, Dudlm, Gayl)	1 Q	3 A 1 L	see Killchoman (West)	3 Q 3 L (+ Clagn, Downan, Croash, Kynaskeill)	1 Q
Change?			?		Decrease	
Size of Change?					-0.25	
IAFs	dun	dun		see Killchoman (West)	dun/ dun/ dun	crannog
Viking Antiquities						
MCM		chapel	chapel	see Killchoman (West)	chapel/ cross slab	chapel/ high cross
OTR	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Relative Size	4	4	4	5	5	4
Relative Favourability	3	2	3	4	4	3

Modern Name	Kindrochid	Leckgruinart	Leek	Lossit (in Rhinns)	Nave Island	Nerabus
Name 1749-51	Kandrochit	Leekgrunart	Leek	Lossit in Rins	Island Neue	Nerabolls
Generic	G *ceann* (m)	ON *lækr (m)/ fjörðr* (m)	ON *lækr* (m)	G *losaid* (f)	G *eilean (m)*	ON *bólstaðr* (m)
Parish	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman
OS NGR	NR232687	NR277692	NR223678	NR185563	NR292758	NR226551
Altitude (m)	50	30	25	70	10	30
Coastal?	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	2.25	3.40	2.35	0.80	0.10	0.30
Direction to Sea	N	N NW	W	WSW	SE	E
Landing Place Quality	3	1	2	2	3	2
Soil Associations	552	99/552	552	308	557	103
Simplified Soil Assoc.	2	1	2	2	2	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	PSP	PQAN/ QPCG	PSP	S	QGSG/ D	E/ S (OD nearby)
Simplified Geology	MIX	MIX	MIX	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER
Land Quality	4	6	4	3	3	3
Extent in 1507	40s (Schannagangrig et Kindrokit)		33s 4d	33s 4d (with Ard)	8s 4d [Church]	£4 3s 4d [Church]
Extent in 1541	23s 4d		2 1/2M	2 1/2M (with Ardunlane)		
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722	2 Q (with Smail)	3 L	3 Q 1 A (Leack Sannaigb, Grannard & Caspellen)	1 Q	1 Q 2 C (with Ardn)	1 Q
Change?	Increase					
Size of Change?	.25					
IAFs	crannog		dun	dun/ fort/ fort	Viking longhouse?	
Viking Antiquities						
MCM					chapel/ cross carving	chapel/ chapel
OTR	N	Y	N	N		Y
Relative Size	3	3	4	4	1	5
Relative Favourability	3	3	2	2	3	3

Modern Name	Octofad	Octomore	Olistadh	Orsay	Sanagmore	Sanaigbeg
Name 1749-51	Ochtofad	Ochtomore	Olista	Island Noarsa	Sanogmore	Sanogbeg
Generic	G *ochdamh* (adj)	G *ochdamh* (adj)	ON *staðir* (m. pl.)	G *eilean (m)*	ON *vík* (f)	ON *vík* (f)
Parish	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman
OS NGR	NR219545	NR248589	NR218583	NR163515	NR237707	NR221698
Altitude (m)	45	50	110	20	16	50
Coastal?	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	0.40	0.65	2.30	0.10	0.25	0.80
Direction to Sea	SE	SE	NW	WNW		W
Landing Place Quality	2	3	3	1	3	2
Soil Associations	309	308W	309	394	99T/103/381	99T
Simplified Soil Assoc.	2	2	2	5	1	1
Solid/ Drift Geology	E	S/ QOF	E/ S	S/E	PSP/ PKP	PSP/ L
Simplified Geology	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER	MIX	MIX
Land Quality	3	3	3	1	6	6
Extent in 1507	33s 4d (with Ochtocladesell)	33s 4d also 33s 4d (Ouchtmor et Garry)		16s 8d [Church]	16s 8d [Church] also 33s 4d [Church]	40s (Schannagangrig et Kindrokit)
Extent in 1541	16s 8d	2 1/2M	16s 8d		16s 8d (Sandag and Neaneganc)	
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722	1 Q	3 Q 1 L 1 C (Octm, Cult, Lorgb, Grim, Dudlm, Gayl)			3 A	3 Q 1 A (Leack Sannaigb, Grannard & Caspellen)
Change?				Decrease		
Size of Change?				-0.5		
IAFs	dun	dun			dun/ dun; 3 forts nr Sangb	fort; 3 forts nr Sanogm
Viking Antiquities						
MCM	chapel/ carved stone			chapel/ cross	chapel	
OTR	Y	Y	N	-	N	N
Relative Size	2	2	2	2	5	1
Relative Favourability	3	3	3	1	4	4

Modern Name	Smaull (South)	Sunderland (Farm)	Tormisdale	Torony	zero	Allallaidh
Name 1749-51	Smail	Sunderland	Tormastil	Torronich	Pendicle of Ballynaby	Alelay Pend. of Nosebrig
Generic	ON *völlr* (m)	ON *þing* (n)	ON *dalr* (m)	G *torr* (m)	Transferred name	ON *leiti* (n)
Parish	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Kilarrow
OS NGR	NR214685	NR246645	NR193587	NR236561	NR235685	NR408582
Altitude (m)	25	50	75	50	60	150
Coastal?	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
Distance to Sea (km)	0.40	3.10	0.80	0.20	1.50	4.75
Direction to Sea	SSW	ESE	W	SE	W	NE
Landing Place Quality	2	0	3	1	2	0
Soil Associations	99T/552	308	309	99	552	253
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	2	2	1	2	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	QGSM/ PKP	PKP/ QCG	E/ S	E/ S	QGSM	caLSK
Simplified Geology	MIX	MIX	OTHER	OTHER	MIX	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS
Land Quality	6	4	3	5	4	6
Extent in 1507	33s 4d	33s 4d	33s 4d			
Extent in 1541	2 1/2M	2 1/2M	2 1/2M			
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722	2 Q (with Kind)	4 Q 1 L (Shind, Cuill Masher, Forl, Cladeveill)	1 Q	1 A		
Change?						
Size of Change?						
IAFs	dun/ fort	crannog/ castle				
Viking Antiquities						
MCM	chapel?			chapel		
OTR	N	Y	N	Y	N	N
Relative Size	4	4	4	2	1	1
Relative Favourability	4	2	3	3	2	3

Modern Name	Ardlarach	Avinlussa	Avonvogie	Ballitarsin	Barr	Carrabus (Mid)
Name 1749-51	Ardlorauch	Avinlussa	Avinvogy	Ballytarson	Barr	Carabus
Generic	G *àird* (f)	G *abhainn* (f)	G *abhainn* (f)	G *baile* (m)	ON *barð* (n)	ON *bólstaðr* (m)
Parish	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow
OS NGR	NR293586	NR351581	NR360563	NR355611	NR391608	NR314639
Altitude (m)	10	35	55	55	85	25
Coastal?	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	0.35	3.70	6.00	3.00	4.90	1.15
Direction to Sea	WNW	WNW	WSW	W	ENE	SSE
Landing Place Quality	3	0	0	0	0	2
Soil Associations	97T	1A	334	333	165	552
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	1	4	2	1	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	QLA	PMD/ caLSK	PE (LDK to the N)	PMD	caLSK	QLA
Simplified Geology	OTHER	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	OTHER (M. CALC.)	OTHER	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	OTHER
Land Quality	5	7	2	3	7	3
Extent in 1507	33s 4d	33s 4d (with Killezegane)		33s 4d	33s 4d	6s 8d [Church] also 25s
Extent in 1541	2 1/2 M			2 1/2 M	2 1/2 M	25 s
Extent in 1562	2 1/2 M	16s 8d		2 1/2 M	2 1/2 M	
Extent in 1722	1 Q 2 C	1 A		1 Q	1 Q	3 L
Change?						
Size of Change?						
IAFs						dun
Viking Antiquities						
MCM				chapel		
OTR	Y	N	N	N	N	Y
Relative Size	4	2	1	4	4	3
Relative Favourability	4	4	1	2	4	3

Modern Name	Cattadale	Cill Bhraenan	Corr Airidh	Curlach	Daill	Dluich
Name 1749-51	Cattadill	Killbranan	Corary	Curiloch	Dail	Dluich*
Generic	ON *dalr* (m)	G *cill* (f)	UNCERTAIN	G *currach* (m)?	ON *dalr* (m)	G *faiche* (f)
Parish	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow
OS NGR	NR386601	NR374623	NR312571	NR328567	NR363637	NR358622
Altitude (m)	70	100	30	20	30	36
Coastal?	N	N	N	N	N	N
Distance to Sea (km)	5.60	5.00	2.30	3.10	4.10	3.50
Direction to Sea	ENE	WSW	NW	SW	WSW	WSW
Landing Place Quality	0	0	3	3	0	0
Soil Associations	165	242Y	333	336	242Y	242Y
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	2	2	4	2	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	caLSK	SB/ LB	QBR	QBR	PMD/ caLSK	PMD/ caLSK
Simplified Geology	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	MIX	OTHER	OTHER	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS
Land Quality	7	4	3	2	6	6
Extent in 1507		£3 6s 8d (Kilkilbrarne (sic), Ouchinfreich)	33s 4d (with Ilylan)		£3 6s 8d (Kilkilbrarne (sic), Ouchinfreich)	
Extent in 1541	(16s 8d 1545)	16s 8d	2 1/2 M (with Ilaneynusk)		50s (Dalbeg, Dalmoir and Gorthe)	8s 4d
Extent in 1562		16s 8d	16s 8d	8s 4d		(Ochtonaffrache 16s 8d)
Extent in 1722	1 A	3 Q (with Dal, Ochtonafr. & Surn)	1 A	1 L	3 Q (with Ochtonafreitch, Kilb & Surn)	3 L (with Gertenaillworie)
Change?						Increase
Size of Change?						0.25
IAFs					dun	
Viking Antiquities						
MCM		chapel				
OTR	N	N	Y	N	N	N
Relative Size	2	2	2	1	4	1
Relative Favourability	4	2	3	2	3	3

Modern Name	Duich	Eallabus	Eorrabus	Gartachossan	Gartloist	Grobolls
Name 1749-51	Duich	Alabus	Yorabus	Gortachosan	Gartlusk	Grobolls
Generic	G *faiche* (f)	ON *bólstaðr* (m)	ON *bólstaðr* (m)	G *gart* (m)	G *gart* (m)	ON *bólstaðr* (m)
Parish	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow
OS NGR	NR319545	NR336632	NR359646	NR344609	NR333609	NR338598
Altitude (m)	15	20	40	25	30	30
Coastal?	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	1.50	2.00	4.30	2.00	2.00	1.20
Direction to Sea	SW	SW	SW	W	W	WNW
Landing Place Quality	2	2	0	2	2	3
Soil Associations	1A	333W	333	99	333	99
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	2	2	1	2	1
Solid/ Drift Geology	PMD/ PE	QLA	caLL(ZL)	PMD	QLA/ OD/ D	QBR/ ZQPA/ LL
Simplified Geology	OTHER	OTHER	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	OTHER	OTHER	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS
Land Quality	5	4	6	5	3	7
Extent in 1507	41s 4d (et Kilcalumkile NOT Kilchoman)	16s 8d [Church]	33s 4d	33s 4d	25s (with Coyf)	33s 4d
Extent in 1541	2 1/2 M			2 1/2 M	16s 8d	2 1/2 M
Extent in 1562			2 1/2 M	2 1/2 M	16s 8d	2 1/2 M
Extent in 1722	1 Q	1 Q (with Kinnabols)	3 A	5 L	3 L	3 L
Change?	Decrease		Increase	Increase		
Size of Change?	-0.25		0.5	0.25		
IAFs				fort		
Viking Antiquities	Viking Burial					
MCM						
OTR	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Relative Size	4	2	4	4	2	4
Relative Favourability	4	2	3	4	3	5

Modern Name	Island (House)	Kilennan (Lower)	Kilennan [Upper]	Killarrow	Killinallan	Kinnabus
Name 1749-51	Island	Killeenan (Lower)	Killeenan (Upper)	Killarow	Killenalien	Kinabolls
Generic	G *eilean (m)*	G *cill* (f)	G *cill* (f)	G *cill* (f)	G *cill* (f)	ON *bólstaðr* (m)
Parish	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow
OS NGR	NR307567	NR350570	NR356581	NR332628	NR313718	NR313633
Altitude (m)	10	80	35	6	15	10
Coastal?	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	2.00	6.00	4.05	1.70	1.30	0.60
Direction to Sea	SW	WNW	WNW	SW	N	SSW
Landing Place Quality	2	0	0	2	2	3
Soil Associations	1A	334	1A	1A	105	97
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	4	1	1	2	1
Solid/ Drift Geology	QBR	PE; Ca. nearby to N & S	caLSK	QLA	QQJ/ OD	QLA
Simplified Geology	OTHER	OTHER (M. CALC)	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER
Land Quality	5	2	7	5	3	5
Extent in 1507	33s 4d (et Corozen)		33s 4d (K) (cum piscaria de Lessane)	16s 8d [Church] alos £3 3s 4d [Church]	33s 4d (et Garisay)	33s 4d [Church]
Extent in 1541	2 1/2 M (with Corary)				2 1/2 M	
Extent in 1562	16s 8d					
Extent in 1722	1 A	1 A	1 A	1 A Given as two gleibs to both ministers	1 Q	1 Q (with Alabols)
Change?						Decrease
Size of Change?						-0.5
IAFs	fort					
Viking Antiquities						
MCM			see Lower Killeenan	church/ sculptured stones	chapel	chapel
OTR	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y
Relative Size	2	2	2	2	4	4
Relative Favourability	4	1	4	4	2	4

Modern Name	Kynagarry	Lagbuie	Laggan	Lyrabus	Mullindry	Nereby
Name 1749-51	Coinigarry	Lagboy	Laggan	Lyrabolls	Mulindra	Nerby
Generic	ON *garðr* (m)	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	ON *bólstaðr* (m)	G *muileann* (m)	ON *býr* (m)
Parish	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow
OS NGR	NR313633	NR333628	NR285555	NR292644	NR358596	NR361604
Altitude (m)	85	3	5	20	40	80
Coastal?	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Distance to Sea (km)	5.60	0.45	0.10	1.40	3.25	3.80
Direction to Sea	WNW	S	SE	S	WNW	E
Landing Place Quality	0	2	2	3	0	0
Soil Associations	165	97	97T	552	333W	242Y
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	1	1	2	2	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	caLSK	QLA	QBR	QMB/ QBR	LDK/ PE	SB/ LB
Simplified Geology	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	MIX
Land Quality	7	5	5	3	6	4
Extent in 1507	33s 4d		33s 4d	33s 4d (et Cullipollis)	£3 6s 8d (Mullyndry, Rosker, Nauisporge)	33s 4d
Extent in 1541	2 1/2 M		2 1/2 M		(2 1/2 M 1545)	(2 1/2 M 1545)
Extent in 1562	2 1/2 M		2 1/2 M			
Extent in 1722	1 Q		7 L (with Torra & fishing)	1 A	3 L (with Leatur)	1 Q
Change?					Decrease	
Size of Change?					-0.25	
IAFs			dun/ fort			
Viking Antiquities						
MCM			chapel/ cross slab			
OTR	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Relative Size	4	2	4	2	4	4
Relative Favourability	4	4	4	3	3	2

Modern Name	Nosebridge	Octavullin	Rosequern	Scarrabus	Skerrols	Sorn
Name 1749-51	Nosbrigg	Oclawillin	Rosquern	Skarabolls	Skerolls	Surn
Generic	ON *borg* (f)	G *ochdamh* (adj)	G *ros* (m)	ON *bólstaðr* (m)	ON *staðir* (m. pl.)	ON *?á* (f)
Parish	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow
OS NGR	NR372602	NR347641	NR384610	NR348652	NR351638	NR344627
Altitude (m)	90	40	85	60	54	20
Coastal?	N	N	N	N	N	N
Distance to Sea (km)	4.90	2.50	5.40	4.45	3.75	2.60
Direction to Sea	W	SW	ENE	SW	SW	WSW
Landing Place Quality	0	3	0	0	0	2
Soil Associations	333W/242Y	333	242Y	165	165	333W
Simplified Soil Assoc.	2	2	2	1	1	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	LDK/ PE	caLL/ ZA	SB/ LB	caLL/ ZA	caLL/ ZL	PMD
Simplified Geology	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	MIX	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	OTHER
Land Quality	6	6	4	7	7	3
Extent in 1507	£3 6s 8d (Mullyndry, Rosker, Nauisporge)	33s 4d et Drummall)	£3 6s 8d (Mullyndry, Rosker, Nauisporge)	33s 4d	33s 4d [Church]	25s [Church]
Extent in 1541	2 1/2 M	25s	16s 8d	2 1/2 M		
Extent in 1562	(2 1/2 M 1545)	(Drumalla 16s 8d)	(16s 8d 1545)	2 1/2 M		
Extent in 1722	1 Q	1 Q 1 A (with Drumalla)	1 A	1 Q	1 Q	3 Q (with Dal. Kilb. & Ochton.
Change?		Increase				Increase
Size of Change?		0.25				0.25
IAFs	fort					
Viking Antiquities						Viking burial
MCM						
OTR	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y
Relative Size	4	2	2	4	4	3
Relative Favourability	3	4	2	4	5	3

Modern Name	Tallant	Tigh nan Cnoc	Torra	zero	Airidh Ghuaidre	Ardachie
Name 1749-51	Tallent	Taynornock	Torra	Glebe	Ariquary	Ardochy
Generic	ON *land* (n)	G *tigh* (m)	ON *á* (f)	SE *glebe*	G *àirigh* (f)	G *àird* (f)
Parish	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilarrow	Kilmeny	Kilmeny
OS NGR	NR336586	NR354647	NR345547	NR340625	NR399626	NR410641
Altitude (m)	70	35	50	15	120	135
Coastal?	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	2.05	4.10	3.85	1.60	3.65	2.20
Direction to Sea	NW	SW	WSW	SW	ENE	ENE
Landing Place Quality	3	0	0	2	0	0
Soil Associations	333	165	1A	1A	165	165/242Y
Simplified Soil Assoc.	2	1	1	1	1	1
Solid/ Drift Geology	LL	caLL	LDK	QLA	SB/ LB; caLLSK nearby	Much caLSK in this area
Simplified Geology	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	OTHER	MIX; HIGH CALC	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS
Land Quality	6	7	7	5	7	7
Extent in 1507	33s 4d				16s 8d	£3 6s 8d (Ballech, Ardac, Ballecl)
Extent in 1541	2 1/2 M		6s 8d		16s 8d	2 1/2 M
Extent in 1562	2 1/2 M		6s		16s 8d	2 1/2 M
Extent in 1722	3 L	1 L	7 L (with Laggan & fishing)		1 A	1 Q
Change?	Decrease					
Size of Change?	-0.25					
IAFs						
Viking Antiquities						
MCM						
OTR	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N
Relative Size	4	4	1	2	2	4
Relative Favourability	4	5	4	4	4	4

Modern Name	Ardnahoe	Baile Tharbhach	Ballachlaven	Balleachdrach	Ballighillan	Ballimartin
Name 1749-51	Ardnoho	Ballyharvey	Ballyclavan	Balierauch	Ballgillan	Ballymartin
Generic	G *àird* (f)	G *baile* (m)	G *baile* (m)	G *baile* (m)	G *baile* (m)	G *baile* (m)
Parish	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny
OS NGR	NR423716	NR362674	NR371675	NR422652	NR408696	NR370661
Altitude (m)	65	95	107	60	100	70
Coastal?	Y	N	N	Y	N	N
Distance to Sea (km)	0.40	6.70	5.80	0.75	2.25	5.80
Direction to Sea	E	E	E	E	E	E
Landing Place Quality	2	0	0	2	2	0
Soil Associations	165	165	165	165	253	165
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	1	1	1	5	1
Solid/ Drift Geology	QQA5	caLL/ OD	caLL	LLV	caLLK/ OD	caLL
Simplified Geology	OTHER	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS
Land Quality	6	7	7	7	1	7
Extent in 1507	33s 4d (et Balleuleif)	33s 4d (with Sengart)	33s 4d [Church]	£3 6s 8d (Ballechtarroch, Ardauch, Balleclachag)	33s 4d (with Killeyegan)	(33s 4d Lek et Stynybollis)
Extent in 1541	2 1/2 M (Ballelewand Ardinhow)	2 1/2 M			16s 8d	(25s Stanepoll)
Extent in 1562	16s 8d					(25s Staynbolshay)
Extent in 1722	1 Q 1 L (with Uaberneik & Anhl)	1Q	2 Q (with Robolls)	6 Q (L, GnT, Gortles, Kilsl, Ballucht, Ballec, Kilm, Turm)	1 Q	3 L
Change?		Increase				
Size of Change?		0.5				
IAFs			dun	dun		
Viking Antiquities						
MCM						
OTR	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Relative Size	2	2	4	2	2	3
Relative Favourability	4	4	4	4	2	5

Modern Name	Ballyclach	Ballygrant	Balole	Balulive	Bolsa	Carnbeg
Name 1749-51	Ballyclach	Ballygrant	Balloal	Baluive	Bolsa	Carnbeg
Generic	G *baile* (m)	G *baile* (m)	G *baile* (m)	G *baile* (m)	ON *bólstaðr* (m)	G *càrn* (m)
Parish	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny
OS NGR	NR416642	NR395662	NR355661	NR405699	NR386775	NR416678
Altitude (m)	130	70	60	80	90	50
Coastal?	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	1.60	3.35	5.50	2.30	0.60	1.20
Direction to Sea	E	E	SW	E	N	E
Landing Place Quality	2	0	0	2	2	2
Soil Associations	165	242Y	165	165	181	165
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	2	1	1	3	1
Solid/ Drift Geology	LLV/ OD	caLSK/ OD	caLL/ OD	caLLK/ (QQA5)	LBD	PMD/ caLLK
Simplified Geology	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS
Land Quality	7	6	7	7	2	7
Extent in 1507	£3 6s 8d (Ballechtarroch, Ardauch, Balleclachag)	33s 4d (with de duobus Capollis)		33s 4d (with Ardinho)	33s 4d (et ejusdam partis de Skaulastoll)	16s 8d [Church]
Extent in 1541			2 1/2 M	2 1/2 M (Ballelewand Ardinhow)	25s (with Overnag)	
Extent in 1562				16s 8d		
Extent in 1722	6 Q (L, GnT, Gortenles, Kilsl, Ballucht, Ballec, Kilm, Turm)	1 A	3 A (with Leick)	1 Q	1 Q 1 L (with Uaberneik & AnH)	1 A
Change?						
Size of Change?						
IAFs	dun	crannog?			dun/ (fort see Cove)	
Viking Antiquities						
MCM		(parish church)				
OTR	N	Y	N	N	N	N
Relative Size	2	2	4	2	2	2
Relative Favourability	4	3	4	4	1	4

Modern Name	Cill Sleabhan	Cove	Doodilbeg	Doodilmore	Duisker	Eacharnach
Name 1749-51	Kilslevan	Cove	Dudil(beg)	Dudil(more)	Duisker	Eachvarnach
Generic	G *cill* (f)	ON *vik* (f)	ON *dalr* (m)	ON *dalr* (m)	ON *sker* (n)	G *ach* (loc. part.)
Parish	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny
OS NGR	NR421673	NR401781	NR345748	NR367741	NR361669	NR410642
Altitude (m)	75	40	30	120	85	130
Coastal?	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	1.10	0.35	0.30	2.10	6.00	2.25
Direction to Sea	ENE		NW	WNW	SW	E
Landing Place Quality	2	3	1	1	0	2
Soil Associations	165	3/187/ raised beaches	CHECK	184	165	165
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	1	2	4	1	1
Solid/ Drift Geology	caLLK/ QA3	LBD near bay, else QQJ	QQJ	LBD	ZA/ caLL/ OD	caLLK
Simplified Geology	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	OTHER	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS
Land Quality	7	7	3	2	7	7
Extent in 1507	33s 4d [Church]			25s (Dovidill et Tyeid)	33s 4d	25s (et Gortane)
Extent in 1541				8s 4d	2 1/2 M	
Extent in 1562			8s 4d	8s 4d	2 1/2 M	
Extent in 1722	6 Q (L, GnT, Gortenles, Kilsl, Ballucht, Ballec, Kilm, Turm)	1 Q 1 L (with Uaberneik & AnH)		3 Q 1 L 1 C (Octm, Cult, Lorgb, Grim, Dudlm, Gayl)	1 A	
Change?					Decrease	
Size of Change?					-0.5	
IAFs		fort (see Bolsa)	dun; fort nr Dudilmore	fort nr Dudilbeg	dun	
Viking Antiquities						
MCM	chapel				chapel/ chapel	
OTR	N	N	N	N	N	N
Relative Size	4	2	1	1	4	3
Relative Favourability	4	5	2	1	4	4

Modern Name	Esknish	Finlaggan	Gortan	Keills	Kepollsmore	Kilmeny
Name 1749-51	Eiskinish	Portineilan	Gortantoid	Kilkolumkill	Keppolsmore	Killmeny
Generic	ON *staðir* (m. pl.)	G *port* (m)	G *goirtean* (m)	G *cill* (f)	ON *bólstaðr* (m)	G *cill* (f)
Parish	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny
OS NGR	NR367647	NR393685	NR339732	NR415684	NR377656	NR391653
Altitude (m)	35	70	30	75	55	80
Coastal?	N	N	Y	Y	N	N
Distance to Sea (km)	5.50	3.70	1.15	1.60	5.15	3.80
Direction to Sea	SW	ESE	NW	ENE	ENE	E
Landing Place Quality	0	0	2	3	0	0
Soil Associations	242Y	165	105	165	242Y	242Y
Simplified Soil Assoc.	2	1	2	1	2	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	LMD/ PMD	caLLK	QQJ	caLLK/ OD	LMD/ PMD	SB/ LB
Simplified Geology	MIX	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	OTHER	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	MIX	MIX
Land Quality	4	7	3	7	4	4
Extent in 1507	£3 6s 8d (et Orobollis)	33s 4d also 33s 4d (Lachc. cum 1/8 Portalane)	25s (Dovidill et Tyeid)	25s [Church]	33s 4d	33s 4d [Church]
Extent in 1541		3 M 10s			2 1/2 M (K:beg 16s 8d)	
Extent in 1562	2 1/2 M	3 M 10s			2 1/2 M (K:beg 16s 8d)	
Extent in 1722	1 Q	1 Q 1 L 1/2 C (with Quenskeir & Keillado)	1 Q 1 A (with Ballenish)	3 L	3 A (Keppals)	6 Q (L, GnT, Gortenles, Kilsl, Ballucht, Ballec, Kilm, Turm)
Change?		?	Increase		Increase	
Size of Change?			0.75		0.5	
IAFs		crannog/ castle	fort	crannog?	fort	fort
Viking Antiquities						
MCM		chapel		chapel		church
OTR	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Relative Size	4	4	2	3	4	4
Relative Favourability	2	5	2	5	2	2

Modern Name	Knocklearoch	Leek	Lossit	Margadale	Mulreesh	Persabus
Name 1749-51	Knocklerock	Leek	Lossit in Kilmeny P.	Mergadel	Mulrish	Persobolls
Generic	G *cnoc* (m)	UNCERTAIN	G *losaid* (f)	ON *dalr* (m)	G *maol* (m)	ON *bólstaðr* (m)
Parish	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny
OS NGR	NR399649	NR359652	NR412655	NR394744	NR403687	NR417690
Altitude (m)	115	60	120	145	100	75
Coastal?	N	N	N	N	N	N
Distance to Sea (km)	3.10	5.20	1.65	2.40	3.00	1.35
Direction to Sea	ENE	SW	E	E	E	ENE
Landing Place Quality	0	0	0	2	2	2
Soil Associations	165	165	165	165	165	165
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	1	1	1	1	1
Solid/ Drift Geology	caLSK/ OD	caLL/ OD	caLLK	LBD	caLLK (PMD)	caLLK
Simplified Geology	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS
Land Quality	7	7	7	7	7	7
Extent in 1507	33s 4d (with Balleoschane) [Church]	25s 4d (et Stanapolis: 33s 4d in 1509)	33s 4d [Church]			25s [Church]
Extent in 1541		8s 4d				
Extent in 1562		16s 8d (with Knockis)		6s		
Extent in 1722	1 Q	3 A (with Balleolla)	6 Q (L, GnT, Gortenles, Kilsl, Ballucht, Ballec, Kilm, Turm)	2 C	1 A	1 A
Change?		?				Decrease
Size of Change?						-0.25
IAFs			broch			dun
Viking Antiquities						
MCM			chapel		chapel/ incised cross	
OTR	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Relative Size	4	1	4	1	2	3
Relative Favourability	4	4	4	4	5	5

Modern Name	Port Askaig	Robolls	Scanistle	Sean Ghairt	Staoisha	Staoisha Eararach
Name 1749-51	Portaskaig	Robolls	Scanlastell	Sheanyart	Stoinsha (Nather)	Stoinsha (Upper)
Generic	G *port* (m)	ON *bólstaðr* (m)	ON *þing* (n)	G *gart* (m)	ON *setr* (n)	ON *setr* (n)
Parish	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny
OS NGR	NR431692	NR396667	NR407676	NR380675	NR403 712	NR399724
Altitude (m)	10	75	76	75	90	120
Coastal?	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Distance to Sea (km)	0.02	3.40	2.30	5.00	2.40	2.10
Direction to Sea	E	E	E	E	E	ENE
Landing Place Quality	3	0	2	0	2	2
Soil Associations	190	242Y	165/242Y	165	165	165
Simplified Soil Assoc.	4	2	1	1	1	1
Solid/ Drift Geology	ZA4/ QA3	caLSK/ PMD	caLLK/ OD	caLL	LBD	LBD
Simplified Geology	OTHER	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS
Land Quality	2	6	7	7	7	7
Extent in 1507	3s 4d	£3 6s 8d (with Eskillis)	33s 4d (see also Spulse)	33s 4d (et Balhervy)		33s 4d
Extent in 1541	40d	2 1/2 M				2 1/2 M
Extent in 1562						2 1/2 M
Extent in 1722	2 C	2 Q (with Ballechlavan)	Out of the rentall'	1 Q	1 A	1 A
Change?	Increase			Increase		
Size of Change?	0.1			0.5		
IAFs					crannog	see Nather Stoinsha
Viking Antiquities						
MCM						see Nather Stoinsha
OTR	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Relative Size	1	4	4	2	2	2
Relative Favourability	3	3	5	5	4	4

Modern Name	Storakaig	Tiervaagain	Torrabus	Airigh nam Beast	Ardbeg	Ardenistle
Name 1749-51	Storgaig	Teenvagin	Torabus	Arinobiast	Ardbeg	Ardeeneslell
Generic	G *ach* (loc. Part.)	G *tìr* (m)	ON *bólstaðr* (m)	G *àirigh* (f)	G *àird* (f)	G *àird* (f)
Parish	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton
OS NGR	NR405619	NR381647	NR422703	NR416475	NR415463	NR391450
Altitude (m)	113	65	90	55	10	20
Coastal?	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	3.25	4.85	0.70	1.20	0.20	0.25
Direction to Sea	ENE	ENE	E	SE	SSE	W
Landing Place Quality	0	0	2	3	2	3
Soil Associations	165	242Y	165	250	242/335	242V
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	2	1	4	2	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	caLSK/ PMD	SB/ LB/ OD	LBD	QLP/ D	QLP/ D/ OD	QLP/ D/ OD
Simplified Geology	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	MIX	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER
Land Quality	7	4	7	2	3	3
Extent in 1507	16s 8d [Church]		16s 8d [Church]	[part of Larg £13 6s 8d?]	[part of Chantor alias Kinror £6 13s 4d?]	[part of Larg £13 6s 8d?]
Extent in 1541						
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722	1 A	6 Q (L, GnT, Gortenles, Kilsl, Ballucht, Ballec, Kilm, Turm)	1 A	1 Q (with Ardimissey)		3 C
Change?						
Size of Change?						
IAFs						
Viking Antiquities						
MCM						
OTR	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Relative Size	4	1	2	1	2	1
Relative Favourability	4	2	5	2	3	3

Modern Name	Ardilistry	Ardimersay	Ardmeinach	Ardmore	Ardtalla	Arivoichallum
Name 1749-51	Ardelistor	Ardimersay	Ardmenoch	Ardmore	Artala	Aryolcalum
Generic	G *àird* (f)	G *àird* (f)	G *àird* (f)	G *àird* (f)	G *àird* (f)	G *àirigh* (f)
Parish	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton
OS NGR	NR441490	NR437475	NR465510	NR465505	NR466545	NR349499
Altitude (m)	15	10	30	15	20	35
Coastal?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Distance to Sea (km)	0.40	0.05	0.40	0.10	0.15	2.95
Direction to Sea	SSE	E	SE	ENE	SE	WSW
Landing Place Quality	3	3	3	3	3	2
Soil Associations	242	242	242V	99/242(V)	99/242	334
Simplified Soil Assoc.	2	2	2	1	1	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	QLP/ D	ZAC/ D/ LLP	QLP/ D	QLP/ ZAC/ D	SPE/ D	PE
Simplified Geology	OTHER	MIX	OTHER	MIX	MIX	OTHER
Land Quality	3	4	3	6	6	3
Extent in 1507	[part of Larg £13 6s 8d?]	[part of Larg £13 6s 8d?]	[part of Chantor alias Kinror £6 13s 4d?]	[part of Chantor alias Kinror £6 13s 4d?]	[part of Chantor alias Kinror £6 13s 4d?]	
Extent in 1541			16s 8d	16s 8d	2 1/2 M	
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722	1 Q 1 A (with Knockrinsey)	1 Q (with Arinabeisc)	1 A	1 A	1 Q	
Change?						
Size of Change?						
IAFs	dun/ dun/ fort	dun/ fort/ crannog	dun	dun	dun/ fort	
Viking Antiquities						
MCM	chapel					
OTR	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Relative Size	4	4	2	2	4	1
Relative Favourability	3	3	3	4	4	3

Modern Name	Asabus	Ballivicar	Ballychatrigan	Ballynaughton beg	Ballynaughtonmore	Ballyneal
Name 1749-51	Assibus	Ballyvikar	Ballyhatricun	Ballynaghton Beg	Ballynaghton More	Ballyneal
Generic	G *bólstaðr* (m)	G *baile* (m)	G *baile* (m)	G *baile* (m)	G *baile* (m)	G *baile* (m)
Parish	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton
OS NGR	NR308427	NR343468	NR323419	NR394468	NR393465	NR370450
Altitude (m)	100	25	80	50	55	15
Coastal?	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	2.00	1.50	0.70	1.40	1.25	0.50
Direction to Sea	SE	SSE	ESE	SSE	SSE	
Landing Place Quality	3	3	3	3	3	3
Soil Associations	335	333	333	250	242	242/335?
Simplified Soil Assoc.	2	2	2	4	2	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	caLSK	LL	QZSC/ SPE	SPE/ caSPE/ D	SPE/ caSPE/ D	caSPE/ SPE/ D
Simplified Geology	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	MIX	MIX	MIX	MIX
Land Quality	6	6	3	2	4	4
Extent in 1507	[part of Oo de Yley £13 6s 8d?]		[part of Oo de Yley £13 6s 8d?]	[part of Larg £13 6s 8d?]	[part of Larg £13 6s 8d?]	[part of Larg £13 6s 8d?]
Extent in 1541			2 1/2 M	2 1/2 M	2 1/2 M	2 1/2 M
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722		3 L	1 Q	1 A	1 A	1 Q
Change?				Decrease	Decrease	
Size of Change?				-0.5	-0.5	
IAFs			dun		fort	fort
Viking Antiquities						
MCM						
OTR	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Relative Size	1	3	4	2	2	4
Relative Favourability	4	4	3	2	3	3

Modern Name	Callumkill	Claggain	Cnoc Rhaonastil	Cragabus (Middle)	Creagfinn	Giol
Name 1749-51	Killcolumkill	Clagin	Knockronisdill	Cragabus	Craigfin	Gille
Generic	G *cill* (f)	G *claigeann* (m)	G *cnoc* (m)	ON *bólstaðr* (m)	G *creag* (f)	ON *gil* (n)
Parish	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton
OS NGR	NR408465	NR460533	NR438487	NR326451	NR453522	NR284439
Altitude (m)	40	30	35	80	30	80
Coastal?	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	0.80	0.20	0.15	1.20	1.30	0.90
Direction to Sea	S	E	SW	ENE	E	ESE
Landing Place Quality	3	3	3	3	3	2
Soil Associations	250	241	158/242	335	242	335
Simplified Soil Assoc.	4	2	1	2	2	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	QLP/ D	SPE/ D	QLP/ D/ OD	LL/ PMD; caLSK at C/R	SPE/ D	PE
Simplified Geology	OTHER	MIX	OTHER	M. CALC.; H. CALC	MIX	OTHER
Land Quality	2	4	5	6	4	3
Extent in 1507	[part of Larg £13 6s 8d?]	[part of Chantor alias Kinror £6 13s 4d?]		[part of Oo de Yley £13 6s 8d?]	[part of Chantor alias Kinror £6 13s 4d?]	[part of Oo de Yley £13 6s 8d?]
Extent in 1541	2 1/2 M (with Largebrak)	8s 4d	(Hardharnoill et Knokrowin 16s 8d 1545)	16s 8d/ 16s 8d (part of Illantasseyn)	8s 4d (1545)	25s
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722	3 L	1 A (Clagincarrach)	1 Q 1 A (with Ardelistie)	1 Q	1 A	3 L
Change?	Decrease	Increase			Increase	
Size of Change?	-0.25	0.25			0.25	
IAFs	dun/ dun	dun		dun	dun	fort
Viking Antiquities						
MCM	chapel	chapel				
OTR	N	Y	Y	N	N	N
Relative Size	2	1	4	4	1	3
Relative Favourability	2	3	4	4	3	2

Modern Name	Glen Egedale	Glenastle	Grasdale	Kilbride	Kildalton	Killeyan (Upper)
Name 1749-51	Glencgidale	Glenastells	Grastell	Killbride	Killdallton	Killean
Generic	G *gleann* (m)	G *gleann* (m)	ON *dalr* (m)	G *cill* (f)	G *cill* (f)	G *cill* (f)
Parish	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton
OS NGR	NR333517	NR302449	NR300475	NR383467	NR450500	NR277431
Altitude (m)	20	90	70	60	20	70
Coastal?	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	1.75	0.90	0.45	1.40	1.00	0.60
Direction to Sea	WSW	WNW W	NNW	S		S W
Landing Place Quality	2	2	3	3	3	2
Soil Associations	1A/99	335 335	335	335	99	335/335
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	2	2	2	1	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	PE; LDK on N C. Grian.	PE	QQJ	SPE/ D	QLP/ D	LDK
Simplified Geology	OTHER; H. CALC.	OTHER	OTHER	MIX	OTHER	MIX
Land Quality	5	3	3	4	5	4
Extent in 1507	£3 6s 8d (Glennegadale et in Carmagane)	[part of Oo de Yley £13 6s 8d?]	[part of Oo de Yley £13 6s 8d?]	[Under Island Texa?]	[part of Chantor alias Kinror £6 13s 4d?]	[part of Oo de Yley £13 6s 8d?]
Extent in 1541	2 1/2 M	10s	2 1/2 M (with Kintray)	8s 4d (Other 'Kilbred' 8s 4d)		41s 4d
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722	1 Q	4 C + 3 C	5 L (with Kantraw)	1 A	1 A	5 L
Change?						
Size of Change?						
IAFs	dun				dun/ fort	possible dun
Viking Antiquities						
MCM				chapel	par. ch/ high X/ stone X:es	chapel
OTR	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Relative Size	4	3	2	2	2	5
Relative Favourability	4	2	3	3	4	3

Modern Name	Kilnaughton	Kinnabus	Kintour	Kintra	Lagavulin	Leek Kannokaky
Name 1749-51	Killnaghton	Kinabus	Kintoure	Kantraw	Lagawillin	Leekkannockoly
Generic	G *cill* (f)	ON *bólstaðr* (m)	G *ceann* (m)	G *ceann* (m)	G *lag* (m)	G *leac* (f)
Parish	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton
OS NGR	NR344451	NR294424	NR457513	NR320483	NR404457	NR422474
Altitude (m)	5	100	10	10	10	50
Coastal?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Distance to Sea (km)	0.10	1.70	0.90	0.30	0.20	0.75
Direction to Sea	E	SW	NE	NW	S	SE
Landing Place Quality	3	2	3	3	3	3
Soil Associations	333/381	333	99/242	335	1A/242	334
Simplified Soil Assoc.	2	2	1	2	1	4
Solid/ Drift Geology	QQJ; LDK at Cornabus	LDK	caSPE	PE	QLP/ D	QLP
Simplified Geology	OTHER/ MIX	MIX	MIX	OTHER	OTHER	OTHER
Land Quality	3	4	6	3	6	2
Extent in 1507	25s [Church]	[part of Oo de Yley £13 6s 8d?]	[part of Chantor alias Kinror £6 13s 4d?]	[part of Oo de Yley £13 6s 8d?]	[part of Larg £13 6s 8d?]	
Extent in 1541			2 1/2 M (Taldcrant 8s 4d)	2 1/2 M (with Grawstill)	(Heryne et Largebrak 16s 8d 1545)	
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722	1 A		3 L (with Aros)	5 L (with Grastill)		
Change?	Decrease		Decrease			
Size of Change?	-0.25		-0.25			
IAFs		fort/ crannog	fort	dun	castle	
Viking Antiquities						
MCM	chapel				former site of par. church	
OTR	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Relative Size	3	2	3	2	2	1
Relative Favourability	3	3	4	3	4	2

Modern Name	Leorin	Leorin	Lurabus	Machrie (Hotel)	Proaig	Solam
Name 1749-51	Lorin (Lower)	Lorin (Upper)	Lurabus	Macharie	Proaig	Solam
Generic	ON *á* (f)	ON *á* (f)	ON *bólstaðr* (m)	ON *machair* (f)	ON *vik* (f)	ON *heimr* (m)
Parish	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton
OS NGR	NR353485	NR360492	NR337435	NR327491	NR457576	NR411482
Altitude (m)	30	50	85	10	5	115
Coastal?	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N
Distance to Sea (km)	3.40	4.00	0.50	0.75	0.10	2.05
Direction to Sea	W	W	E	E	E	SSE
Landing Place Quality	0	0	2	2	2	2
Soil Associations	165/333	165	335/335	97T/99	99	250
Simplified Soil Assoc.	1	1	2	1	1	4
Solid/ Drift Geology	LL	caLSK/ PMD	QQJ/ QZSC	PE	QQJ	caSPE/ D
Simplified Geology	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	HIGHLY CALCAREOUS	MIX	OTHER	OTHER	MIX
Land Quality	7	7	3	5	5	2
Extent in 1507			[part of Oo de Yley £13 6s 8d?]		20s	[part of Larg £13 6s 8d?]
Extent in 1541	(2 1/2 M 1545)		25s		16s 8d (with Ballecrauch)	
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722	1 A	1 A	1 Q	1 Q	1 A	1 A
Change?					Decrease	
Size of Change?					-0.25	
IAFs			dun/ dun			
Viking Antiquities				Viking Age Coin Hoard		
MCM						
OTR	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Relative Size	2	2	3	4	3	2
Relative Favourability	5	5	3	4	4	1

Modern Name	Stremnishmore	Strimnishbeg	Stuine	Surnaig	Texa	Tighandrom
Name 1749-51	Stramnish More	Stramnish Beg	Stuine	Surnaig	Island Texa	Tayandrum
Generic	ON *nes* (n)	ON *nes* (n)	ON *steinn* (m)	ON *vik* (f)	G *eilean* (m)	G *tigh* (m)
Parish	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton
OS NGR	NR311408	NR306407	NR440523	NR399454	NR392438	NR373461
Altitude (m)	70	80	50	9	15	60
Coastal?	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Distance to Sea (km)	0.45	0.60	2.50	0.15	0.20	0.95
Direction to Sea	ESE	S	E	ESE	NNW SSE	SSE
Landing Place Quality	3	1	3	3	2	3
Soil Associations	333	333	334	242V/335	242	242
Simplified Soil Assoc.	2	2	4	2	2	2
Solid/ Drift Geology	QZSC	PBSC	SPE/ D	QLP/ D/ OD	QLP/ D/ OD	SPE/ D/ OD; LPE Bra/BM
Simplified Geology	MIX	MIX	MIX	OTHER	OTHER	MIX
Land Quality	3	4	2	3	3	4
Extent in 1507	33s 4d		[part of Chantor alias Kinror £6 13s 4d?]	[part of Larg £13 6s 8d?]	41s 8d [Church] (ie the two Kilbrides...)	[part of Larg £13 6s 8d?]
Extent in 1541	2 1/2 M	16s 8d			8s (+ 2 Kilbredis + Cragapols)	16s 8d (with Bra)
Extent in 1562						
Extent in 1722	1 Q	1 A	1 L	5 C (with Drumhunst, Bar, Craegnagouer)	1 A	1 A
Change?					Increase	
Size of Change?					0.25	
IAFs	fort			fort		dun/ fort
Viking Antiquities						
MCM	chapel				chapel	chapel
OTR	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N
Relative Size	4	2	1	2	1	2
Relative Favourability	3	2	2	3	2	3

Modern Name	Tighcargaman	Tokmal	Torradale	Trudernish
Name 1749-51	Taycormagan	Tokamale	Toradale	Trudernish
Generic	G *tigh* (m)	ON *múli* (m)	ON *dalr* (m)	ON *nes* (n)
Parish	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton	Kildalton
OS NGR	NR363459	NR300472	NR380461	NR462525
Altitude (m)	25	70	45	35
Coastal?	Y	Y	Y	Y
Distance to Sea (km)	0.35	0.80	0.85	0.40
Direction to Sea	SSW	NNW	S	NE
Landing Place Quality	3	3	3	3
Soil Associations	335	335	242	99/241
Simplified Soil Assoc.	2	2	2	1
Solid/ Drift Geology	QZSC	LDK	QLP/ D/ OD	SPE/ D
Simplified Geology	MIX	MOSTLY CALCAREOUS	OTHER	MIX
Land Quality	4	6	3	6
Extent in 1507	£3 6s 8d (Glennegadale et in Carmagane)	[part of Oo de Yley £13 6s 8d?]	[part of Larg £13 6s 8d?]	[part of Chantor alias Kinror £6 13s 4d?]
Extent in 1541	(2 1/2 M 1545)	8s 4d	2 1/2 M	2 1/2 M
Extent in 1562				
Extent in 1722	1 Q	1 L	1 Q	1 A
Change?				Decrease
Size of Change?				-0.5
IAFs			fort	fort
Viking Antiquities				
MCM	cross slab	chapel		chapel
OTR	Y	N	Y	Y
Relative Size	2	1	4	2
Relative Favourability	3	4	3	4

APPENDIX III: MEDIEVAL ECCLESIASTICAL ANTIQUITIES

Farm-District	Name	Type of remains	Dimensions	Chapel Orientation	Thickness of Walls	Wall with Door	Earliest Usage?	BG Dimensions	Funerary Monuments?
Ardilistry	Ardilistry	Chapel	7.5x5	E-W	c1m	W			
Ballitarsin	Ballitarsin	Chapel	11.3x4.8 (mound)	E-W	?				
Cragabus?	Blackrock	Swift 1987 otherwise unkown						?	
Artalla	Borra-chille	Enclosure	BG only					Obliterated in 1870s	
Torradale	Brahunisary	Enclosure; ec cross slab	BG only?					11m N-S x 8m	
Conisby	Bruichladdich	Chapel; enclosure	6.2x4.5	E-W	1m			c 20m x 20m	1 plain grave marker
Callumkill	Callumkill	Possible chapel							
Gartloist	Cill a'Bhuilg	Enclosure (chapel?)						17m at widest	
Creagfinn	Cill A'Chubein	Chapel; enclosure	9x6	E-W	1.5	S		48m E-W x 30m	Y
Claggain	Cill An Ailein	Enclosure; Cross slab	BG only					12m at widest	
Killinallan	Cill An Ailein	Place-name							
Kilbride	Cill Bhride	Chapel; enclosure; 7-9thC cross slab	12.2x6.9 (1951)	E-W	c 1m	S	1651		
Kilkolumkill	Cill Chaluim Chille	Chapel; enclosure	9.4x5.7	E-W	c0.9	S	late medieval?		Y
Stremnishmore	Cill Chomhan	Chapel; enclosure	8.3x5.1	E-W	c. 1m	N		24m E-W x 11m	
Killeyan	Cill Eathain	Chapel; enclosure	5x3.5	NE-SW		?	?		
Mulreesh	Cill Eileagain	Chapel; enclosure; 10thC cross slab	7.5x5	E-W	c. 1m	S		18m x 15m	Y
Corsapool	Cill Eileagain Chapel	Chapel; enclosure	8.4x5.8	E-W	spread to 1.4m	N	unknown but ancient?	18m NE-SW x 14m	
Ardenistle	Cill Luchaig	Chapel; enclosure	BG only					24m NE-SW x 13m	
Lagavulin	Cill Mhoire	Enclosure	BG only? Or hut circle					8.5m	
Sanagmore	Cill Ronain	Enclosure	BG only					20m in diamter	2 plain stone grave markers
Kilslevan	Cill Sleabhan	Chapel; enclosure	8.3x5.7	ENE-WSW				13m in diameter	
Tayandrum	Cill Tobar Lasach	Chapel; enclosure	9x5.4	E-W	1m	S		14m E-W max	
Carn	Cilleach Mhicheil	Chapel; enclosure	6.24x4.75	E-W	1.25	S		14.5m NW-SE	
Ballinaby	Cladh Dhubhain	Possible enclosure	BG only					24m NE-SW x 15m	
Wester Elister	Cladh Eilister	Possible chapel	12.5x6.5 or (13x7 1978)	E-W	c. 1m?				
Smaull	Cladh Haco	Enclosure	BG only					18m max diameter	
Glenegedale	Cnoc Grianail	Possible chapel; enclosure	BG only						
Craigfad	Craigfad	Enclosure	BG only						
Tighcargaman	Doid Mhairi	Ringerike cross slab c.1050	Cross slab only						
Duisker	Duisker 1	Chapel; enclosure	8.5x5.5	ENE-WSW	c. 1m			22m N-S x 23m	
Duisker	Duisker 2	Chapel; enclosure	5.2x4.4	ENE-WSW	0.8			13m max diameter	Y

Figure 91: Medieval ecclesiastical antiquities in Islay. Parish centres = dark grey: Other Cill- units = light grey (Data from RCAHMS) I

x	Name	Type of remains	Dimensions	Chapel Orientation	Thickness of Walls	Wall with Door	Earliest Usage?	BG Dimensions	Funerary Monuments?
?	Eaglais a Chapuill	ICD otherwise unknown							
Ballyneal	Farkin's Cottage	Possible chapel; enclosure							
Gartacharra	Gartacharra	Chapel; enclosure	BG only					20m NW-SE x 15m	Y
Octofad	Gleann na Gaoidh	Chapel; enclosure; 2, 7thC, 1 9-10thC cross slabs	8x5	ESE-WNW	1m		9 or 10th C?	35m x 11m	Y
Glenastle	Glenastle	Place-name							
Gruinart	Gruinart	Enclosure	BG only					Only a few boulders remain	
Kelsay		Turf covered mound	10x6						
Keppolsmore	Keppolsmore	Turf covered mound							
Kilchiaran	Kilchiaran	Chapel; enclosure	16x6.5	E-W		N	13th C?	60m NE-SW x 37m (eroded)	Y
Kilchoman	Kilchoman	Chapel; enclosure; 2 ec cross slabs	Modern (1827)				19th C		Y
Kildalton	Kildalton	Chapel; enclosure; 1 8thC, 3 ec cross slabs	19.1x7.5	E-W	0.9			Present wall dates to 19C	Y
Kilennan	Kilennan	Possible chapel							
Finlaggan	Kilfin Chapel	Chapel; enclosure	10.1x6.1	E-W	0.8		renovated late 14th C?		
Killarow	Killarow	Chapel; enclosure							Y
Killbraenan	Killbraenan	Place-name							
Kilmeny	Kilmeny	Chapel; enclosure	at least 5.5x3.5	E-W	c.1m		later Middle Ages?		Y
Kilnaughton	Kilnaughton	Chapel; enclosure	13.7x6.5	E-W	c. 1m	N & S	13th C?		Y
Kilnave	Kilnave	Chapel; enclosure; ec cros slab	11x6.1	E-W	0.9	W	12th C?		Y
Laggan	Laggan	Chapel; enclosure; 9-11thC cross slab	9.5x5 (24.5x10 feet internally)	E-W	? 1m			25m E-W x 6.7m	Y
Finlaggan	Loch Finlaggan	Enclosure only	BG only				early 14th C	11m x 6m	
Lossit in Kilmeny P	Loch Lossit	Chapel; enclosure						Submerged	
?	Mala Bholsa	Possible chapel; enclosure							
Nave Island	Nave Island	Chapel; enclosure	8.55x5.9	E-W	0.9		13th C?	46m N-S x 34m	Y
Nerabolls	Nerabolls 1	Chapel; enclosure	13.9x4.7	E-W	0.9		later Middle Ages?	several apart	Y
Nerabolls	Nerabolls 2	Chapel; enclosure	5.8x4.1	E-W	0.7			15m E-W x 11m	
Orsay	Orsay	Chapel; enclosure; EC cross slab	14.7(10.3)x5.4	E-W	0.8		late medieval (cross fragments 6-8th C?		Y
Texa	Texa	Chapel; enclosure	10.4x5.7	E-W	0.8	S	14th C?	28m E-W x 19m	Y
Tockmal	Tockmal	Chapel; enclosure	8.1x5.7	E-W	c1.25	N	medieval?	27m E-W x c12m	
Trudernish	Trudernish	Ec cross slab	Cross-marked stone only						

Figure 92: Medieval ecclesiastical antiquities in Islay: Parish centres = dark grey: Other Cill- units = light grey (Data from RCAHMS) II